

Hitler's Third Reich – Issue 17

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HITLER'S

Third Reich

Volume
17

Monthly

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HITLER'S Third Reich

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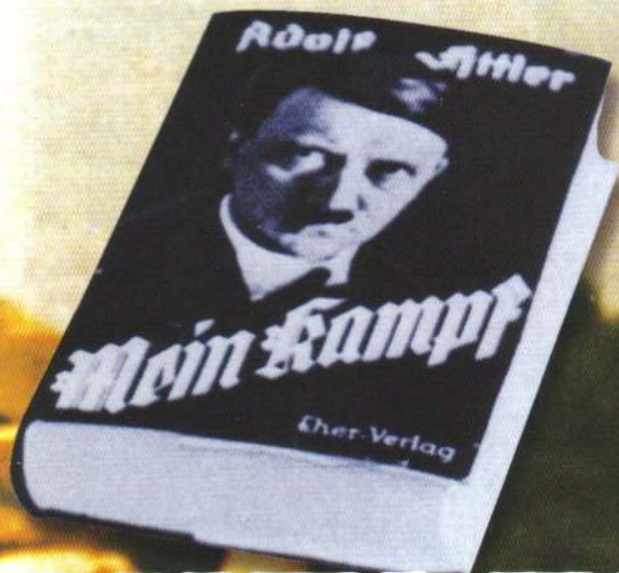
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Although Hitler cultivated a public image as a man with few material needs, the reality was quite different. From his fiscally challenged beginnings, by the early 1930s he had become a multi-millionaire due in large part to the royalties from his best-seller.

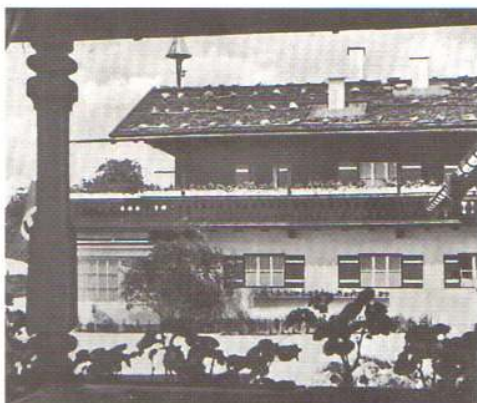


HITLER'S WEALTH

In spite of his modest image, Hitler was one of the the richest men in Nazi Germany. His wealth, initially from royalties as a bestselling author, was multiplied during the war years by loot from occupied Europe.



Above: Hitler's life at his mountain retreat in Berchtesgaden was apparently simple and normal. Here he plays the devoted 'uncle' to Eva Braun's nieces.



Left: Haus Wachenfeld on the Obersalzberg was acquired by Hitler in 1927, the property having been sold by an impoverished widow. Hitler used her necessity to drive the price down. At huge expense to the state, the retreat was turned into a palace befitting a dictator.

Below: Occasionally Hitler would approve a Hoffmann photo that showed the care-laden 'man of destiny' in a more relaxed mood. Here, in a photo taken at Berchtesgaden, the Führer sports the tweedy, country casual look.

Below: An interior view of the Führer's country residence at Berchtesgaden. The decor is surprisingly spartan for a man of Hitler's wealth. But its look of homely lower-middle-class provincialism was designed to present the Führer as still being in touch with his relatively humble origins.



HITLER DESCRIBED his time in Landsberg prison as 'university paid for by the state'. During the summer of 1924 he dictated the first volume of his magnum opus, known to the world as *Mein Kampf*, but originally entitled *Four and a Half Years of Struggle against Lies, Stupidity and Cowardice*. The rather punchier title was the suggestion of Hitler's publisher and business manager, Max Amann. Less respectful members of the Nazi Party dubbed it *Mein Krampf* ('My Cramp' or 'My Fit') – once they had tried to wade through it. The arguments Hitler advances in the book are obviously flawed; they are developed in pretentious prose with many a mixed metaphor. A German literary critic has counted 164,000 grammatical mistakes, which reinforces both the image of Hitler and that of literary critics.

Mein Kampf is long-winded, bombastic and stunningly pretentious. But it made its author a multi-millionaire. Not for the first – or last – time in literary history, events conspired to propel a practically unreadable book to the top of the best seller lists. The first volume, subtitled *Eine Abrechnung* (A settling of accounts) was published on 18 July 1925 by Franz Eher Publications in Munich. Volume II, *Die nationalsozialistische Bewegung* (The National Socialist Movement) was published on 11 December 1926. It did not fill many Christmas stockings. Volume I sold 23,000 copies up to 1929; only 13,000 dedicated readers wanted Volume II.

BESTSELLER

The breakthrough came in 1930 when both volumes were combined into a single edition, priced at eight marks. By January 1933 Hitler's ramblings had sold 287,000 copies. New York publishers Houghton, Mifflin and Company bought the US rights in 1933 and *Mein Kampf* did well in the USA before and during the war years. Hitler religiously checked his royalty statements, right up to the final days in the Berlin Bunker. Once copies were given away at marriages and it became *de rigeur* to have one in the house, sales soared to over ten million copies by 1945. Hitler was also declared tax exempt by the revenue authorities in 1934 and therefore paid no tax on his vast earnings as a 'writer'. His total royalty earnings amounted to RM 8 million.

Hitler's personal finances were quite separate from party funds. The Party's hand-to-mouth existence came to an end in 1930 as it became the largest party in the Reichstag and attracted support from industrialists, bankers and other conservative elements fearful of a communist revolution. However, its primary source of revenue remained the



Above: Hitler is accompanied by Martin Bormann on the Berghof. From his 'magic mountain' he could see himself bestriding the world. The Führer lived here in splendid seclusion – with a hand-picked choice of European art treasures.

The Great Despoilers

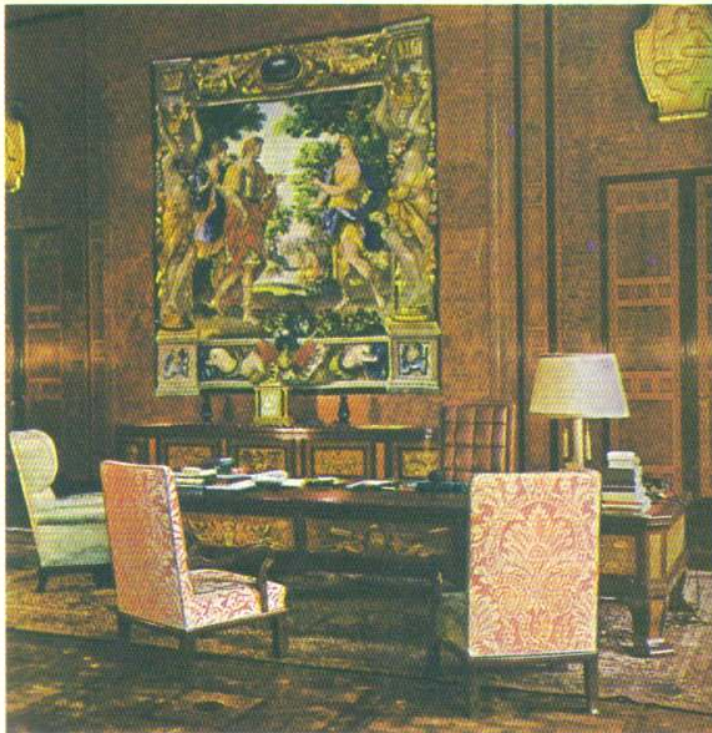
CONSPICUOUS WEALTH, in the manner of some other dictators, was not Hitler's style. His image had to continue to appeal to ordinary Germans; indeed, the contrast between the 'plain and simple' Führer and the obscenely wealthy Herman Goering provided a useful safety valve. Goering's corruption was widely known, and many a Gauleiter followed his example. The Reichsmarshal considered himself a Renaissance man, and needed rich possessions to dramatise his personality.

The myth grew that Hitler was too honest to realise that some of his long-term supporters were utterly corrupt. But absolute power corrupts absolutely, and the peculative opportunities for the Nazi hierarchy were just too good to pass up.

In reality, Hitler amassed a personal collection of seized art far larger than Goering's. Hitler's absorption with art was centred upon elaborate plans for his home town of Linz. Hitler wished to create a Führer museum with a colonnaded facade 500 feet long. He had a special task force set up under the leadership of Alfred Rosenberg. Its mission was to scour occupied Europe for suitable subjects for the collection. Of the 21,000 objects seized in France alone, Linz was to receive all but 700. These few exceptions were allocated to Goering for his collection at Karinhall.



Above: Goering had expensive and exotic tastes. His fabulous hunting lodge at Karinhall was the setting for some magnificent parties. Here a gathering including Il Duce, Count Ciano and Hans Frank are entertained by Goering's pet lioness.



Left: Hitler commissioned Albert Speer to build a new Reich Chancellery in January 1938. The heart of the building was the study. Twenty-seven metres long by 15 metres wide, it was adorned with marble and stolen art work. The picture shows Hitler's ornate writing desk backed by a seventeenth century tapestry from the Gobelin works.

Below: Never wanting to be outdone, Goering built his own residence on the Berghof above Hitler's. This building was used to entertain dignitaries and was a repository for some of his looted art. US Army GIs examine a small part of his collection at the end of the war, including three Rembrandts, three Cranachs and a statue of Eve.





Below: Hitler took great care when presenting his image to the German people. Part of the effect was his dress code. Hitler rarely appeared in civilian dress, except in the days of coat-tail diplomacy under Hindenburg. Instead he opted for military chic; finely tailored tunics with a minimum of decoration. His closet contained countless copies of identical brown shirts with neatly pressed and stitched armbands.

Above: Many of the patricians with whom Hitler came to rub shoulders were fascinated by the Führer. He was a dichotomy; at once a demagogue capable of swaying millions, he was also a classic petit bourgeois. In his shabby blue suit and awkward mannerisms, he looked part way between an NCO and a clerk.

dues paid by party members and from entrance fees to major Nazi events.

The idea that Hitler was in the pocket of big business – the obvious Marxist explanation – does not stand up to scrutiny. German capitalists contributed larger sums to the conservative right; Nazi contributions were no more than political insurance. The industrialist Wilhelm Keppler channelled funds from industry to the NSDAP; what proportion reached the party and how much was kept by Hitler is impossible to determine.

Hitler's own declared taxable income trebled at the end of the 1920s. By 1930 he declared an income of over 48,000 Marks, rising to over 64,000 by 1932. As Ian Kershaw, his most recent biographer observes, Hitler's affected modest tastes in food and clothes "fell within the context of a chauffeur-driven Mercedes, luxury hotels, grand residencies, and a personal livery of body-guards and attendants." Hitler also charged the Nazi newspapers *Völkischer Beobachter* and *Illustrierter Beobachter* for his articles. After the October 1930 election that made him the most powerful force in the Reichstag, the foreign press queued up for interviews – for which they were charged large sums payable directly to Hitler.

Once in power, Hitler did not rule in a visibly ostentatious style: the 'socialist' element in National Socialism was strong, particularly among the SA. On a similar note, when war broke out in 1939, Hitler did not cover himself with gold braid and award himself a chestload of medals in the style of Mussolini: he adopted a plain tunic, decorated only with the Iron Cross he had won on the battlefields of Flanders.

DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR

Once again, Nazi image fooled Germany and the world. Hitler was vastly more wealthy than Goering. *Reichsbank* president Schacht and *Reichsleiter* Martin Bormann independently managed funds for the Führer. The French diplomat André François-Poncet visited the Berghof in autumn 1938 and was whisked up the 'Eagle's Nest', Hitler's RM 30 million eyrie on the peak of the Kehlstein, 5,500 feet above sea level. "Is this the castle of Montsalvat, inhabited by the Knights of the Grail," he asked in his diary, "a Mount Athos sheltering the meditations of a cenobite... a millionaire's fantasy, or only a hideout where brigands take their rest and accumulate their treasure?" He speculated about the motives behind its construction too: "Is it the product of a normal mind, or that of a man tormented by delusions of grandeur, haunted by a desire for domination and solitude, or simply the prey of fear?"

On the Obersalzberg, closed off from public access, Hitler could and did indulge himself. Bormann organized the compulsory purchase of farms adjacent to the Berghof and oversaw the transformation of Hitler's mountain retreat. The gigantism that featured in most of Hitler's construction projects was given full rein for the enormous lobby and conference room. Paintings by old masters looked down on plush carpets, oak panelling and tons of imported marble. The finest Dresden china was used for normal meals, but





when entertaining, Hitler insisted on solid silver plate, much of it stolen from the Jewish merchants of Nuremberg. The guest rooms had en suite bathrooms made from marble and stone. Hitler's own bathroom was done out in Italian marble, a gift from fellow dictator and gold tap enthusiast, Benito Mussolini.

NAZI GOLD

Hitler's wealth attracted enormous speculation during and after the war. Hunts for plane loads of Nazi gold or buried caches of treasures continue to the present day. Yet, unlike his satraps, Hitler was not obsessed with personal wealth. He loved to put on a show to dazzle foreign politicians or over-awe his generals, but he spent much of the war in spartan accommodation. There were few comforts in the windowless concrete fortresses at Rastenberg or Vinnitsa from which he commanded operations on the Russian Front. "A cross between a monastery and a concentration camp" as *Generaloberst* Jodl described it. Hitler did not choose to rule like some latter day Roman Emperor, all jewels and dancing girls – he left that to Goering. All that really mattered to Hitler was power.

Hitler does seem to have dipped into his own as well as party funds to maintain his grip on power. There never was much of a paper trail, and those involved are long dead, but modern research reveals that several of Hitler's senior generals were receiving cash payments until 1945, even after they had been removed from their commands. Generals List and Guderian took cash, and in Guderian's case a confiscated estate as well.

Hitler's flood of royalty payments dried up with his death and the banning of *Mein Kampf* (still illegal in Germany today). His property became that of the new West German state and his lavish residence at Obersalzberg blown up to prevent it becoming a shrine. Art treasures were returned to their owners or quietly removed to British, American or Soviet collections.

HITLER'S MILLIONS

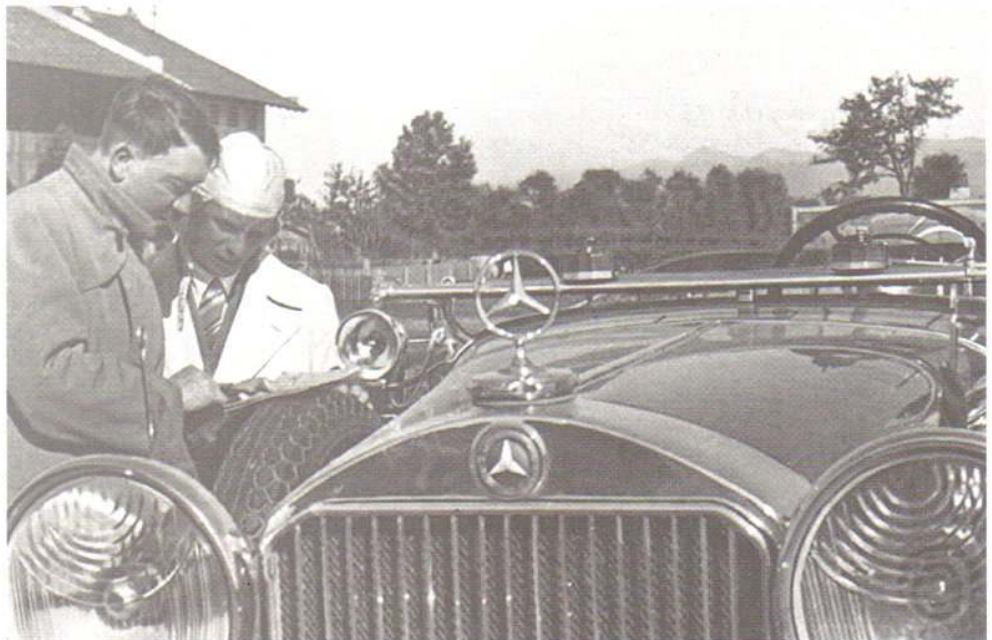
SS Obersturmbannführer Otto Skorzeny, Hitler's favourite commando, escaped to Spain after the US authorities refused his release in the wake of his acquittal on war crimes charges. There, he met former *Reichsbank* president Hjalmar Schacht after his release from four inconclusive trials. There was considerable speculation in the early 1950s that the SS man and the banker were using Hitler's funds to achieve the escape of fugitive Nazis to South America. The Odessa saga has fuelled a number of novels and films, but the true resting place of 'Hitler's millions' will never be known.



Above: Reichsleiter Max Amann was Hitler's publisher. He administered all Hitler's royalties from *Mein Kampf* and the Führer's other writings. He built up the NSDAP's central publishing house (Eher Press) and thanks to his close friendship with Hitler and unscrupulous business practices he gained control of over 80 percent of all Germany's newspapers.



Above: The Führer was a graceless figure in the early days of the movement. When he first entered society he dressed inappropriately, like the provincial that he was. One early acquaintance described him as 'rather common' in his traditional Bavarian outfit of lederhosen, thick woolen socks, red and blue checked shirt and ill-fitting short blue jacket.



Above: The Führer had a passion for motorcars, and Mercedes-Benz did particularly well out of Hitler's close identification with their products. The Mercedes was a statesman's transport and created the right image, so on the seemingly never-ending electioneering campaigns in the late 20s and 30s, Hitler would be chauffeured around Germany in refined luxury.



"With proper guidance, in the course of the Final Solution, the Jews are to be allocated for appropriate labour in the East. Able-bodied Jews ... will be taken for work on roads, in the course of which action doubtless a large number will be eliminated by natural causes".

WANNSEE

CONFERENCE OF DEATH

The villa in the exclusive district of Wannsee in Berlin which housed the Final Solution conference survived both the Allied bombing and the final Russian assault on the city.



On 20 January 1942, Reinhard Heydrich chaired a meeting of top Nazi party bureaucrats, at which the fate of the European Jews was decided.

6 HITLER'S THIRD REICH

ORGANISED on the instructions of Goering, who had relayed the Führer's wishes in the matter, the Wannsee meeting coordinated an act of genocide unprecedented in modern times. The minutes of their discussions were kept by Adolf Eichmann, who later confessed that they "discussed the subject quite bluntly; quite differently from the language which I had to use later in the record. During the conversation they minced no words about it at all."

Eichmann employed all the customary euphemisms in his

record, and genocide was referred to as the Final Solution.

Heydrich was in jovial mood and the meeting was conducted in an atmosphere of Aryan bonhomie: the thought that they might one day be brought to justice entered no-one's mind. Heydrich had one eye on the meeting and another on one of the secretaries. Seduction and slaughter sat side-by-side.

As plenipotentiary for the Four-Year plan, Reichsmarschall Hermann Goering had ordered Heydrich on 31 July 1941 to "present to me, as soon as possible, a draft setting out details of the preliminary

measures in the organisational, technical and material fields for the achievement of the Final Solution of the Jewish question".

The first extermination camp had just been established at Belzec, near Lublin in Poland. There, Dr Christian Wirth, the gas chamber pioneer, oversaw the installation of a purpose-built facility for mass execution. Sealed chambers were designed to be flooded with carbon monoxide, provided by diesel engines. Further camps were planned, and experiments were under way with cyanide gas, but the leading racists in the Nazi party knew the scale of the task



they had set themselves. The issue was: how to capture, transport and murder the Jewish population of Europe, estimated at 11 million people?

MADAGASCAR PLAN

Heydrich opened the meeting by declaring that he had been appointed by Goering to co-ordinate preparations for the Final Solution and that the SS and SD were responsible for its implementation. Heydrich provided a brief summary of 'the struggle which had been carried on against this enemy', the Jewish people. So far this heroic enterprise had seen the expulsion of Jews from every profession and now, the physical removal of the Jews from the 'living space' of the German people – i.e. Europe. He reminded the meeting that in January 1939 Goering had set up the Reich Central Office for Jewish emigration. The objective was to expel the Jews from Germany.

A rare truth slipped from his lips. "The work concerned with emigration," Heydrich observed, "is not only a German problem, but one shared by the authorities

of the countries to which the flow of emigrants was directed. The demand for increasing sums of money to be presented at the time of the landing by various foreign governments, lack of shipping space, demands for entry permits, or the cancelling of same, extraordinarily increased the difficulties of emigration." Few countries wanted a flood of penniless Jews in 1939. And penniless they were – all assets had been seized by the authorities and Jewish organizations abroad had to contribute nearly \$10 million to finance the emigration of the 537,000 Jews allowed to leave.

INTERIM SOLUTION

The outbreak of war in September frustrated the Nazi plan to drive out the Jewish population. In any case, Himmler forbade further emigration 'in consideration of the possibilities

in the East' as Eichmann noted. There, the Nazis had conquered Poland, which they were determined to rule according to their racist precepts: to govern without fear of international consequences as they were at war with Poland's allies and in league with the USSR. What happened in Poland would be out of sight of the German people too.

"Another possible solution, to the [Jewish] problem," Heydrich announced, "has now taken the

place of emigration i.e. the evacuation of the Jews to the east, provided the Führer agrees to this plan". Everyone knew that since the invasion of Russia, the *Einsatzgruppen* death squads, as well as army and police formations had conducted numerous mass shootings in the occupied territories. SS *Sturmabführer* Lange had thousands of Latvian volunteers participating in the slaughter organized by his SD men.

"Instead of emigration, there is now a further possible solution to which the Führer has already given his consent – namely deportation to the East". By "deportation" Heydrich meant mass transportation to the ghettos in occupied Poland, followed by later removal to the death camps of Belzec, Treblinka, Sobibor and Auschwitz.

List of Attendees

Villa Wannsee:

20 January 1942

SS Obergruppenführer
Reinhard Heydrich

SS Sturmbannführer
Adolf Eichmann

Gauleiter (Westphalia-North)
Dr Alfred Meyer,
representing the Ministry of the
Occupied Eastern Territories

SS Gruppenführer
Heinrich Müller

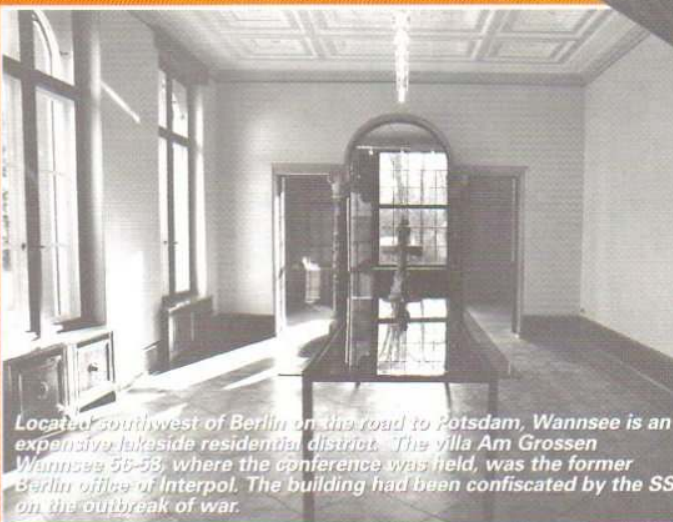
Dr Wilhelm Stuckhart,
Ministry of the Interior

Dr Josef Buhler,
Office of the Governor-General

SS Gruppenführer
Dr Otto Hofmann,
Race & Settlement Office

SS Oberführer
Karl Schöngarth, SD Chief
for the General Government

SS Sturmbannführer
Dr Rudolf Lange,
Commander of the SD in Latvia



Located southwest of Berlin on the road to Potsdam, Wannsee is an expensive lakeside residential district. The villa Am Grossen Wannsee 56-58, where the conference was held, was the former Berlin office of Interpol. The building had been confiscated by the SS on the outbreak of war.

SS Obergruppenführer
Dr Wilhelm Stuckhart,
Ministry of the Interior

Under Secretary of State
Erich Neumann,
Office of the
Four-Year Plan

Dr Roland Freisler,
Ministry of Justice

Materieldirektor
Dr Friederich Kritzinger,
Reichs Chancellery

SS Oberführer
Erich Klopfer,
Party Chancery

Dr George Lieberandt,
Chief Reichs-
administration officer





Above: Adolf Eichmann was appointed to take the minutes of the Wannsee meeting. This efficient clerk recorded the details of mass murder in coldly euphemistic language.

Below left: Heinrich Müller was a career policeman who rose to prominence in the Third Reich. From 1939 to his disappearance in 1945 he was chief of Amt IV of the RSHA – the Gestapo. He personally signed numerous orders for the deportation and execution of Jews.

Below right: Roland Freisler (1893-1945) represented the interests of so-called National Socialist justice at the conference.



The meeting examined the geographical distribution of their victims, from the 131,800 Jews still surviving in Germany to those currently beyond reach – including the 8,000 in Sweden, the 55,500 in European Turkey and 330,000 in the UK. Someone may have been having a joke, but all the figures are accurate to the nearest hundred e.g. 200 in Albania or 5,600 in Denmark, with two improbable exceptions. Heydrich's report stated that there were 2,994,684 Jews in Russia plus 446,484 in the Ukraine and White Russia with the exception of Bialystok. Presumably the data came from an out-of-date Soviet census.

WHAT IS A JEW?

Even in occupied countries or allied nations, the Nazis anticipated trouble. The Nazis themselves had never resolved the exact definition of Jewishness: the race laws were hastily drawn up with obvious errors and omissions. The representative of the Ministry of the Interior, SS *Obergruppenführer* Dr Wilhelm Stuckhart had played his part in this, convincing Himmler that it was not right to kill the children of mixed marriages. His argument

saved an estimated 28,000 lives and contributed to the leniency of the war crimes tribunal after the war. This cut no ice with the Jewish underground movement DIN, which claimed to have assassinated him in 1953.

NATURAL SELECTION

National attitudes to people of mixed blood varied within the Nazi empire. Puppet governments in Slovakia and Croatia cooperated with the same bloodthirsty passion as the Baltic states, but Romania and Hungary gave the Nazis cause for concern. Neither regime shared the Nazis' obsessive racism and Heydrich sourly noted how in Hungary, "a Jew can buy documents which will prove his foreign citizenship". Romania had just been bullied into appointing a commissioner for Jewish questions; Heydrich put on record their demand for Hungary to be compelled to follow suit. SS *Gruppenführer* Hoffmann suggested sending an official from the Main Race and Settlement Office of the SS to Hungary, in the guise of an assistant to the police attaché.

Five million of the eleven million Jews marked for death at this meeting lived in European Russia. Tsarist legislation had confined them to certain towns, making them uniquely vulnerable to the Nazis. When Eichmann's minutes record their planned fate, the double-speak slips momentarily.

WORKING TO DEATH

"Jews are now to be allocated for labour in the East in due course of the Final Solution. Able-bodied Jews will be taken in large labour columns to these districts for work on roads, separated according to sex, in the course of which a great part will undoubtedly be eliminated by natural causes.

"The possible final remnant will, as it must undoubtedly consist of the toughest, have to be treated accordingly, as it is the product of natural selection, and would, if liberated, act as a bud



cell of a Jewish reconstruction.”

Everyone present knew they did not employ Jews as road labourers. If a column of Polish Jews was taken into the woods, the only digging they did was of their own graves.

Two categories of Jew were to be spared, although, as events were to prove, the Nazis eventually consigned both groups to the flames. Jews over 65 were to go to an old-age ghetto in the showcase concentration camp at Theresienstadt (Terezín) near Prague. In practice, many of the elderly and infirm were shot where they lay when the SD or police battalions cleared the ghettos of eastern Europe. The second exemption was for Jewish former soldiers, injured on active duty in the First World War, and Jewish holders of the Iron Cross First Class.

RACE NOT RELIGION

The treatment of people of mixed blood as defined in the Nuremberg race laws was refined at Wannsee, pending ‘absolute final clarification’ that would never be forthcoming because of the essential absurdity of the issue. If both your parents were half-Jews, the Nazis would treat you as a Jew. Someone with a single Jewish grandparent would be German, unless ‘the general appearance of the person of mixed blood is especially racially objectionable’ or they had a criminal record, or ‘he feels and behaves like a Jew’. No wonder Goering thumped the table on one memorable occasion, bellowing “I decide who is a Jew!”

Erich Neumann and Wilhelm Stuckhart argued for a program of mass sterilisation to deal with the mixed race couples, Stuckhart observing that the complex definitions of ‘who is a Jew’ were a recipe for bureaucratic chaos.

The only note of caution came from Neumann, whose concern was for the economy: he wanted assurance that Jews doing vital war work would not be killed before replacements were available. Heydrich promised this



would be done, but such rational considerations were eventually to be set aside.

By contrast, Dr Josef Buhler pressed for the “implementation of the final solution to start in the General Government” because the 2.5 million Jews in Poland were living within easy reach of the sites proposed for the extermination camps. They had to be removed from the territory of the General Government, he said, because “they represented an immense danger as carriers of epidemics, and permanently contributed to the disorganisation of the economy through black market operations. Moreover... the majority were unfit for work.”

Eichmann’s report ends with a cryptic note. “Towards the end of the conference the various types of possible solutions were discussed”, so the advocates of carbon monoxide poisoning could cite the benefits over mass shooting. Heydrich wound up the Wannsee Conference with a demand that all agencies lend the SD every assistance in carrying out the Final Solution. Business concluded after 90 minutes, the Nazis went to lunch.

Above: Hermann Goering’s power base within the party was slipping, and rivals within the party leadership were working to replace the fat Reichsmarshal in Hitler’s favour. Like many Nazis, he saw an opportunity to please the Führer in Hitler’s obsession with solving the Jewish question. It was on Goering’s orders that Heydrich convened the conference to establish a ‘Final Solution’.

Below: According to Heydrich’s figures there were some 11 million Jews practising the faith throughout Europe. However, since the Nazi definition of a Jew was based on race not religion, this led to farcical and arbitrary decisions concerning the fate of those of mixed race.





PARTY STATE

Authority within the Third Reich descended solely from Adolf Hitler. Ultimate control of the Nazi Party (and through the party the German state) was in the hands of the Führer. Even such powerful figures as Hermann Goering and Heinrich Himmler knew better than to flout the Führer's wishes – though they were quite happy to plot against one another.



Adolf Hitler, deputy to the Führer Rudolf Hess, SA chief Viktor Lütze and Reichsführer SS Heinrich Himmler salute at a party meeting. Although officially under the control of the party chiefs, the SA and the SS were in reality independent organisations reporting directly to the Führer.

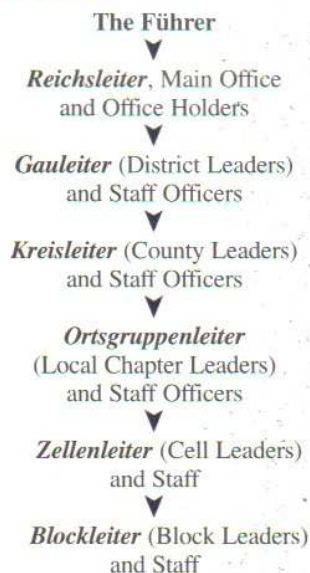
The Nazi Party was Adolf Hitler's means of controlling the German nation. By insinuating its tentacles into every aspect of government and society, the party was to become the state.

THE NSDAP was a long way from being the monolithic organisation it became when Adolf Hitler took power at the beginning of 1933.

Even so, it had the shape and structure which would enable the Nazis to take control of almost every aspect of German life.

At the top was Adolf Hitler as the Führer or Leader. Beneath him were eight layers of administration and control, down to the humble *Parteigenosse* – PG or Party Comrade. From the top of the organisation to its most junior members, every man and woman was a proud 'National Socialist German', a citizen of the Third German Reich.

The Party was a pyramid. Hitler was at the apex, and all party members were sworn to unquestioningly obey his every wish. The principal Political Leaders, on a scale of descending authority were:



The *Reichsleitung* of the Leadership Corps consisted of the *Reichsleiter* or Reich Leaders of the Party, the *Hauptämter* (Main Offices) and the *Ämter* (Offices). The *Reichsleiter* of the Party were, next to Hitler, the

highest officeholders in the Party hierarchy. All the *Reichsleiter* and Main Office and officeholders within the *Reichsleitung* were appointed by Hitler and were directly responsible to him.

As chief of the Party Chancellery, immediately under Hitler, Martin Bormann was an extremely important force in directing the activities of the Leadership Corps. A decree of 16 January 1942 provided that the participation of the Party in all important legislation, governmental appointments, and promotions had to be undertaken exclusively by Bormann. He took part in the preparation of all laws and decrees issued by the Reich authorities and gave his assent to those of the subordinate governments.

The *Gau* was the main territorial unit in the Nazi party structure. It corresponded roughly to the old Reichstag



Above: Rudolf Hess and Martin Bormann take their accustomed positions near to the Führer. After Hess flew to Scotland in 1941, Bormann used his proximity to the Führer decisively in the struggle to control the NSDAP.

"The Commandments of the National Socialists:
'The Führer is always right.'
'The Party Programme must be your dogma.'
'It demands your utter devotion to the Movement.'
'Right is what serves the Movement – and thus serves Germany.'"

NSDAP Handbook 1939



Above: Hitler is attended by an SS guard of honour and by Reichs propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels. The little Nazi spin-doctor was typical of the senior Nazi leadership, holding high government and party offices while also serving as Gauleiter of Berlin.

Below: Not all of the Nazi chieftains rose to the top of the government tree. Many of the 'Old Comrades' were little more than street-fighting thugs, ill-suited to positions of responsibility. Men like Julius Streicher, seen here with Goebbels, could not be trusted with government posts.



electoral districts and civil defence regions. The word was derived from the old German term for a particular tribal region retained in such area names as Hennegau and Warthegau.

Although the term had been in use since the 1920s, *Gau* were formalised in 1933 to designate the NSDAP's *Hoheitsgebiet* or 'Highest Sovereign Territory' below the Reich level. In 1939 there were 40 *Gau*, with two more being established in Austria and Czechoslovakia. The 43rd was the *Auslandsorganisation* for overseas Germans, which was administered from Berlin by British-born *Gauleiter* Ernst Wilhelm Bohle.

GAULEITERS

Each *Gauleiter* was appointed by Hitler and was responsible to him. Among the *Gauleiter* in 1941 were men who held high positions within the NSDAP. They included Baldur von Schirach, *Gauleiter* for Vienna; Joseph Goebbels, *Gauleiter* for Berlin; Konrad Henlein, *Gauleiter* for Sudetenland; and Fritz Sauckel *Gauleiter* for Thuringia.

The *Gau* in turn were broken down into *Kreise* (Circuits or Districts) each administered by a *Kreisleiter*. The *Kreise* were roughly equivalent to counties. The next smallest party unit was the *Ortsgruppe* (Local Group). *Ortsgruppenleiter* (Local Group Leaders) were responsible for a town section.

The *Zellenleiter* (Cell Leader) headed a party *Zellne* (Cell) which could be based on a neighbourhood or an employment unit. The Cell Leader was usually responsible for four or five blocks of households.

The *Blockwart* (Block Warden) or *Blockleiter* (Block Leader) was the lowest official or *Hoheitsträger* (bearer of authority or jurisdiction) in the Nazi Party.

The Block leader was the real grass-roots organiser of the Nazi Party. He was responsible for the 'overall political situation' on his block. This included the duty to report 'harmful rumours', the

collection of membership dues, and the keeping of card indexes on all residents.

GRASS-ROOTS NAZIS

As 'preacher and champion of the National Socialist worldview', the block leader was charged with such propaganda tasks as getting residents to join the *Hitlerjugend*, SA or other party organisations, and recruiting them for Nazi events. Many *Blockleiter* became petty tyrants, feared for possible denunciations.

At the outbreak of war there were 40 *Gau* and 1 Foreign Organisation *Gau*, 808 *Kreise*, 28,376 *Ortsgruppen*, 89,378 *Zellen* and 463,048 *Blocke*.

Counting political leaders and their staffs, there were more than a million party members directly involved in running the NSDAP – some estimates range as high as two million.

Large though that number is, the bulk of the membership was found in the Party Formations, which were largely independent of direct control. The main Party Formations were the SA, which had Hitler as chief and Victor Lutze as Chief of Staff, and the SS, headed by *Reichsführer* Heinrich Himmler. However, *Hoheitsträger* had the right to co-opt personnel from party formations for specific tasks.

'CO-ORDINATION'

The most dramatic changes in German society came as part of *Gleichschaltung* – the programme of "Co-ordination of the Political Will" that was first mooted by Hitler in March 1933. By the end of the year *Gleichschaltung* had led to the establishment of new state and social institutions under Nazi control.

As part of the programme Labour Unions were dissolved and the *Deutsche Arbeitsfront* DAF – German Labour Front established. A key component of the DAF was the NS *Betriebszellenorganisation* – NSBO or National Socialist Shop Cell Organisation – the Nazi industrial propaganda units in factories set up to replace the old trades.



December 1941, and Adolf Hitler announces Germany's declaration of war against the United States to the Reichstag. In accordance with the leadership principle, such momentous decisions were made by the Führer alone.

The Führer Principle

THE BASIS of the Party organisation is the Führer thought. The public is unable to rule itself either directly or indirectly. All Political Leaders stand as appointed by the Führer and are responsible to him. They possess full authority toward the lower echelons."

"Only a man who has absorbed the school of subordinate functions within the Party has a claim to the higher Führer offices. We can only use Führers who have served from the ground up. Any Political Leader who does not conform to these principles is to be dismissed or to be sent back to the lower offices, as *Blockleiter* or *Zellenleiter* for further training.

"The Political Leader is not an office worker but the Political Deputy of the Führer... Within the Political Leadership, we are building the Political Leadership of the state... The type of the Political Leader is not characterised by the office which he represents. There is no such thing as a Political Leader of the NSBO, etc., but there is only the Political Leader of the NSDAP."

OATH TO THE FÜHRER

Each Political Leader was sworn in yearly. According to the Party Manual, the wording of the oath was as follows:

"I pledge eternal allegiance to

Adolf Hitler. I pledge unconditional obedience to him and the Führers appointed by him."

The Organisation Book of the NSDAP also states that:

"The Political Leader is inseparably tied to the ideology and the organisation of the NSDAP. His oath only ends with his death or with his expulsion from the National Socialist community."

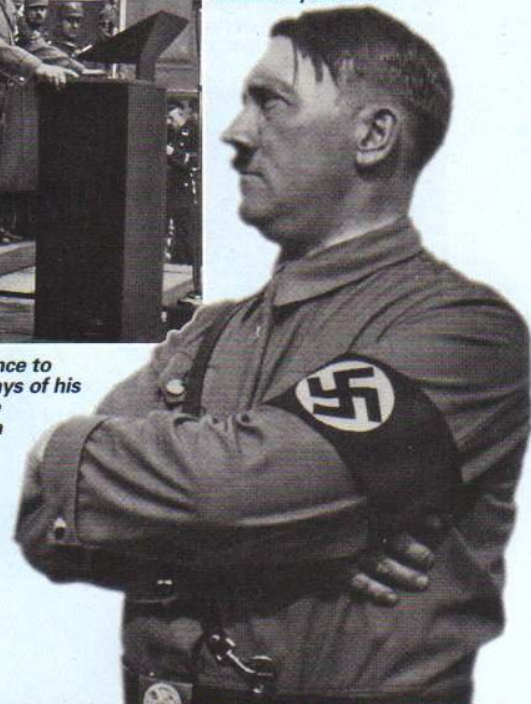
Nazi policies and directives were issued by Hitler and the leader of the Party Chancellery, Martin Bormann. They passed directly through the chain of command of the *Hoheitsträger*, or as policies issued by the various *Reichsleiter* and Reich office holders through functional and technical channels. Such directives were certain to be brought to the attention and understanding of the bulk of the membership of the Leadership Corps.

Under the Führer Principle and by their sworn oaths, all party officials were bound to obey blindly and without question orders received from their superiors. Nevertheless, it was decided by the War Crimes tribunal at Nuremberg that all members of the Leadership Corps were responsible for crimes committed or ordered by the Nazi Party.



Left: Hitler addresses the Party faithful outside Munich's Feldherrnhalle. To committed Nazis, the Führer's word was law, since it was an article of National Socialist faith that Adolf Hitler was always right. Any command by Hitler passed straight down the chain – the annual oath of loyalty each Nazi functionary swore ensured its immediate implementation, without question.

Right: There is some evidence to suggest that in the early days of his power, Hitler looked on the Führer Principle simply as a tool by which he could control the Nazi Party. But by the late 1930s the adulation and worship he received convinced him that he genuinely was infallible.





Above: Even though Hitler and the Nazis came to power in Germany by legal means, it did not take them long to turn their constitutional power into an absolute dictatorship. The enabling law of March 1933 gave Hitler's word the force of law, and by the end of the year the NSDAP was legally identified with the German state.



Above: Heinrich Himmler addresses students at an Adolf Hitler Schule. The Nazi attitude to schools was that their primary function was not to educate children, but was to turn out future Nazis.

Below: Hitler tours the Blohm and Voss shipyard. Although officially the National Socialist German Worker's Party, the Nazi Party did everything it could to destroy independent workers' groups.



unions. German workers said that NSBO actually stood for "Noch sind die Bonzen oben" – "The party favourites are still on top".

HITLER THE DICTATOR

Perhaps the most important piece of *Gleichschaltung* was the Enabling Law passed on 22 March 1933, which gave Hitler dictatorial powers for four years. It was renewed in 1937 for a further four years.

On 1 December 1933, a law was enacted "to secure the unity of Party and State." This law held:

"After the victory of the National Socialist Revolution, the National Socialist German Worker's Party is the sole bearer of the concept of the German State. It is inseparable from the State, and its organisation will be determined by the Führer."

By 1935, the intermingling of Party and State was nearly complete. In a Nuremberg speech of that year, Hitler was to

proclaim "It is not the State which gives orders to us. It is we who give orders to the State."

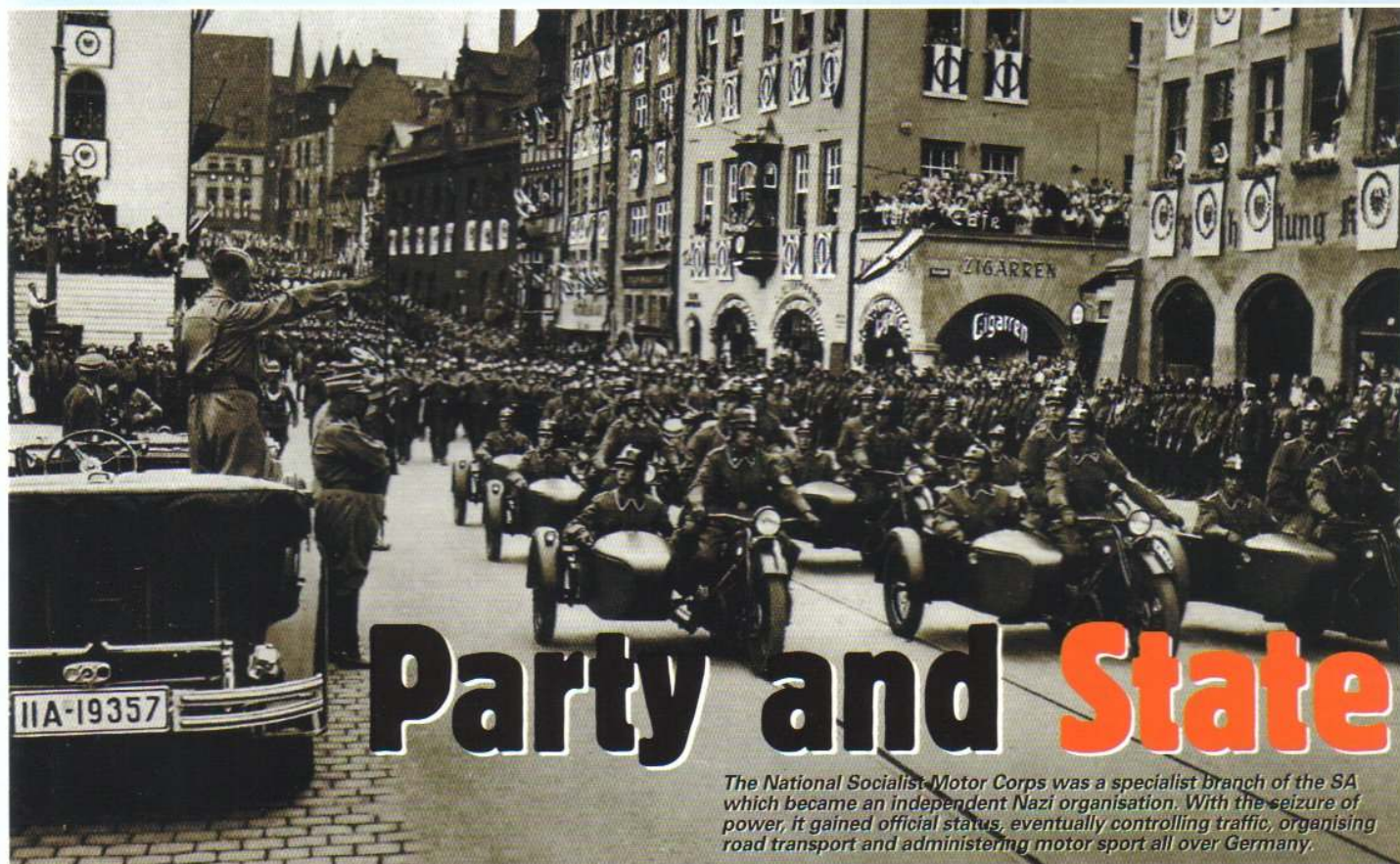
The NSDAP was primarily a party of men for men. In October 1931, however, the *National-sozialistische-Frauenschaft* or NS Women's Groups was founded by Elsbeth Zander, who was succeeded by Gertrud Bäumer and Gertrud Scholtz-Klink.

PARTY WOMEN

Considered a basic *Gliederung* (limb) of the party, its purpose was to ensure that women raised their families as patriots and believers in the precepts and orders of Adolf Hitler.

The Party State aimed to control from cradle to grave. Children were obliged to join the state youth movements from an early age.

From the age of 10 to 14 boys were enrolled in the *Jungvolk*. From 14 to 18 boys joined the main Nazi youth movement, the *Hitlerjugend* or Hitler Youth. The



Party and State

The National Socialist Motor Corps was a specialist branch of the SA which became an independent Nazi organisation. With the seizure of power, it gained official status, eventually controlling traffic, organising road transport and administering motor sport all over Germany.

DOMINATION of the German State by the National Socialists was made easier by uniting in the same Nazi chieftains both high office within the *Reichsleitung* and corresponding offices within the apparatus of government. For example, Joseph Goebbels was a *Reichsleiter* in charge of Party propaganda, but he was also a cabinet minister in charge of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment. Himmler held office within the *Reichsleitung* as head of the Main Office for "Volkdom" and as *Reichsführer* of the SS. At the same time, he held the government position of Reich Commissioner for the Consolidation of 'Germanness' and was the governmental head of the German police system.

In addition to the *Reichsleiter*, the *Reichsleitung* (Reich Party Directorate) included up to eleven *Hauptämter*, or Main Offices, and four *Ämter*, or Offices. The *Hauptämter* of the Party included such key

organisations as those for personnel, training, technology (headed by Speer), "Volkdom", (headed by Himmler), civil servants, communal policy, and the like. Party *Ämter*, or offices within the *Reichsleitung* included the Office for Foreign Policy under Rosenberg, which actively participated in plans for aggression against Norway, the Office for Colonial Policy, the Office for Genealogy, and the Office for Racial Policy.

Certain of the main offices and offices within the *Reichsleitung* also had subordinate offices within the *Gauleitung*, or Gau Party Directorate, and *Kreisleitung*, or County Party Directorate. It was through these subordinate offices that the *Reichsleiter* and main office and office holders within the *Reichsleitung* exercised, through functional channels running through subordinate offices on lower regional levels, total control over the various sectors of the national life of Germany.



Left: Joachim von Ribbentrop signs the Axis pact for Germany. Although Ribbentrop's position had been important before the war, with the outbreak of hostilities it became almost irrelevant. Indeed, the former Champagne salesman was one of the few senior Nazis who did not double up their party and state positions: the *Reichsleiter* for foreign affairs was Alfred Rosenberg, and rivalry between the two senior Nazis was intense.

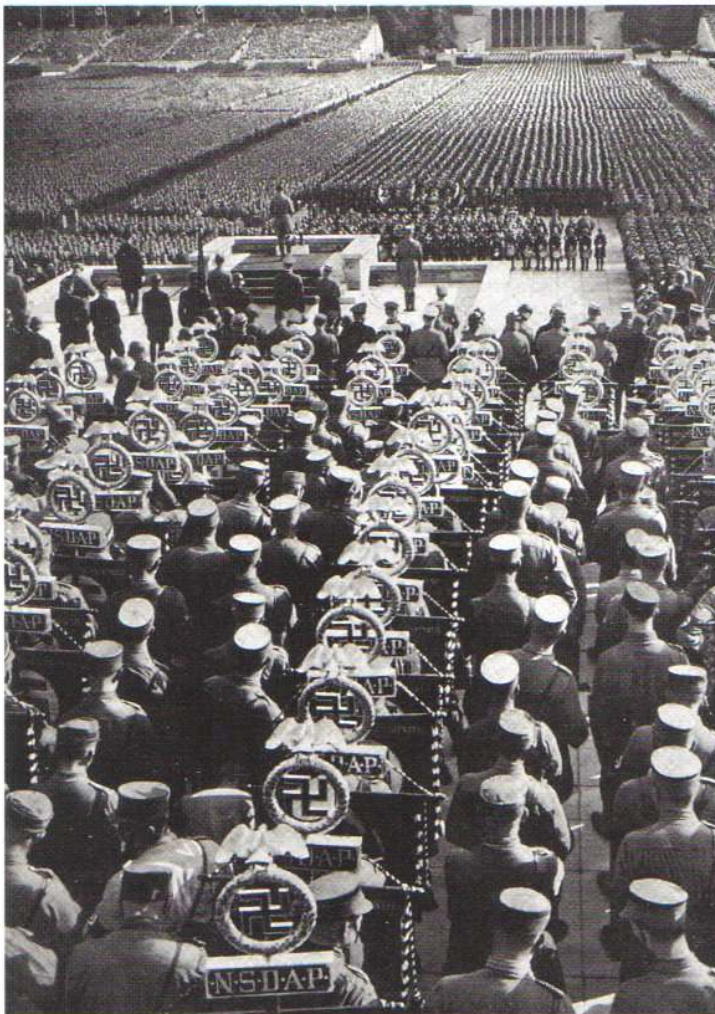
Right: Hitler goes over an article with Reich Press Chief Otto Dietrich. Although nominally Goebbels's subordinate at the Propaganda ministry, Dietrich was an equal member of the *Reichsleitung*.





Above: Hitler addresses students at an early party leadership school at Bernau soon after the seizure of power. The Reichsführerschule were used to instruct the political leaders of the NSDAP in the techniques of administering power in their areas.

Below: Hitler addresses the party faithful at Nuremberg. Although there were several million party members, it was the 700,000 or so members of the leadership corps, from Reichsleiters down to Blockleiters which enabled the NSDAP to control Germany from top to bottom.



HJ became a state agency on 1 December 1936, and membership was made compulsory in 1938.

Though the German schooling and university system remained in place, it was politicised and new establishments were created.

The *Adolf-Hitler-Schule* - Adolf Hitler Schools - selected their pupils from the HJ. During their second year as *Jungvolk* potential pupils were given a racial screening and sent for a two week selection camp.

Life at the *Adolf-Hitler-Schule* was tough and very competitive.

Those pupils who left school might enter university and become members of the *Nationalsozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund* - NSDStB or National Socialist German Students' League. This was an organisation devoted to the furtherance of the Nazi way of life among students. It was considered an important organisation by the Nazis, being classed as a 'limb' of the Party along with the SA, the SS and the NSKK. Support for students might also come from the *Reichstudentenwerk* - the State Student Welfare Organisation.

POLITICS AND SCHOOLS

The *Nationalsozialistische-Dozentenbund* - NS Lecturers' Alliance, a professional association of university lecturers established under Nazi party control - was designed to keep university teachers in line with the party ideology. It was also a mechanism for excluding Jewish academics from the education system, and for weeding out Jewish literature and research.

There was a parallel further education establishment, the *Napola* or *Nationalpolitische Erziehungsanstalten*. National Political Training Institutes were initially established under the Weimar Government to train future leaders, and in the first years of Nazi rule were in competition with the *Adolf Hitler-Schule*.

By 1937 the Napolas had been brought under SS control. A year

later there were 23 Napolas including four in Austria and one in the Sudetenland.

The *Ordensburg* - Order Castles - were the highest residential academies for training the Nazi elite. They were named from the medieval fortresses built by the Teutonic Knights and other orders. Four were established at Crössinsee, Sonthofen, Vogelsang and Marienburg. Each accommodated 500 instructors, administrative staff and grooms and 1,000 students called *Junkers*. Students were usually in their mid 20s.

The *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Oberschule* was a school for future leaders was set up at Feldafing on the Starnberger See. This cadet academy was in direct competition with the Napolas.

LABOUR

In June 1935 a law was promulgated setting up the *Reichsarbeitsdienst* - State Labour Service or RAD. Between the ages of 19 and 25 all physically fit Germans were required to undertake work for six months. Huge construction projects as well as agricultural work were the remit of the RAD. After labour the men were called up for military service and the women for marriage and motherhood.

Prolific mothers qualified for the *Ehrenkreuz der Deutschen Mutter*, the Cross of Honour of the German Mother.

NAZI CONTROL

The penetration of German society by the Party was total; trade, professional and social organisations were Nazified. Perhaps the most bizarre and disturbing example of this was the change to the badge of the *Deutsche Jägerschaft* - The German Hunting Association. The original design, which drew on an old Christian myth, showed a stag's head with the Cross set between the antlers. Following *Gleichshaltung* the design changed and the Christian Cross became the Nazi *Hakenkreuz*.



Party and Government

NAZI PARTY

Führer
Leader of the Party
ADOLF HITLER
Deputy of the Führer
RUDOLF HESS (until 1941)

Leiter der Partei Kanzlei und Sekretär des Führers
Chief of the Party Chancery and Secretary of the Führer
MARTIN BORMANN

Kanzlei des Führers
Chancery of the Führer
Head
PHILIPP BOUHLER

Kanzlei der Partei
Chancery of the Party
Head
MARTIN BORMANN
Deputy Head
HELMUT FRIEDRICH

REICHSLEITUNG

Reich Party Directorate

Chancery of the Führer and Party Censorship
PHILIPP BOUHLER

Chancery of the Party
MARTIN BORMANN

Colonial Policy
FRANZ RITTER von EPP

Ideology and Foreign Policy
ALFRED ROSENBERG

Legal Office (until 1942)
HANS FRANK

Municipal Policy
KARL FIEHLER

Nazi Reichstag Delegation
WILHELM FRICK

Organisation and Labour Front
ROBERT LEY

Party Tribunal
WALTER BUCH

Peasantry
WALTER DARRE

Press Control (Political)
OTTO DIETRICH

Press Control (Economic)
MAX AMANN

Propaganda
PAUL JOSEF GOEBBELS

Reich Labour Service
KONSTANTIN HIERL

SS and Germanisation
HEINRICH HIMMLER

Treasury
FRANZ XAVER SCHWARZ

Youth Education
BALDUR von SCHIRACH

GOVERNMENT

Führer und Reichskanzler
Leader and Reichs Chancellor
ADOLF HITLER

Designated Successors
HERMANN GOERING,
RUDOLF HESS (until 1941)
Successor, named to form
a Government in May 1945
KARL DOENITZ

Head of Presidential Chancery
(*Praesidialkanzlei*)
State Minister (*Staatsminister*)
OTTO MEISSNER

Reichsregierung
Reich cabinet

Reichskanzler
Chancellor
ADOLF HITLER
Vice-Chancellor
FRANZ von PAPEN (until 1934)

Reich Ministers

Reich Chancery
HANS LAMMERS
Air
HERMANN GOERING
Armaments and War Production
ALBERT SPEER
(predecessor: Todt, Minister for
Armaments and Munitions until 1942)
Church Affairs
MERMAN MUHS, Acting
(predecessor: Hans Kerrl)
Economics
WALTER FUNK (predecessors:
Schacht, Schmitt, Hugenberg)
Education
BERNARD RUST
Finance
LUTZ GRAF SCHWERIN von KROSIGK

Food and Agriculture
HERBERT BACKE, Acting
(predecessor: Walter Darre)
Foreign Affairs
JOACHIM von RIBBENTROP
(predecessor: Constantin von Neurath)

Interior
HEINRICH HIMMLER
(predecessor: Wilhelm Frick)

Justice
OTTO THIERACK
(predecessor: Schlegelberger-acting,
Guertner)

Labour
FRANZ SELDTE
Labour Services
KONSTANTIN HIERL

Posts
WILHELM OHNESORGE
(predecessor: von Eltz-Ruebenbach)

Propaganda
PAUL JOSEF GOEBBELS

War
WERNER von BLOMBERG
(until 1938)

Ministers without Portfolio but with
Rank of Reich Minister

KEITEL (predecessor: von Brauchitsch
until December 1941)
DOENITZ (predecessor: Raeder)
BORMANN (predecessor: Hess)
HANS FRANK
SEYSS-INQUART
(predecessor: Röhm, until 1934)
Reich Youth Leader
ARTHUR AXMANN

OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Administrators responsible directly to Hitler

Reichskommissar
Reich Commissioner:

Netherlands
ARTHUR SEYSS-INQUART
Norway
JOSEF TERBOVEN
Ostland (Eastern Territories)
HEINRICH LOHSE
Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia
WILHELM FRICK
State Minister
KARL HERMANN FRANK
General Government-Poland
(General Gouvernement)
HANS FRANK

Chiefs of Civil Administration:

Alsace
ROBERT WAGNER
Bialystock
ERICH KOCH
Carinthia and Carinola
FRIEDRICH RAINER
Lorraine
WILHELM STOEHR
(predecessor: Josef Buerckel)
Lower Styria
SIEGFRIED UIBER-REITHER
Luxembourg
GUSTAV SIMON

POLICE AND SS

Reichsführer SS und Chef der Deutschen Polizei
Reich Leader of the SS and Chief of German Police
HEINRICH HIMMLER

Chef der Ordnungspolizei
Chief of the Order Police
WUENNENBERG
(predecessor: Kurt Daluege)

Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und SD
Chief of Security Police and SD
ERNST KALTENBRUNNER

Reichssicherheitshauptamt
Reich Main Security Office
ERNST KALTENBRUNNER
(predecessor, Reinhard Heydrich)
Chief of Personnel Dept (Amt) I
ERWIN SCHULZ

Chief of Organisation, Administration,
and Law Dept (Amt) II
HAENEL (predecessor: Siegert)
Chief of Security Service (SD)
Dept (Amt) III
OTTO OHLENDORF
Chief of Secret State Police (Gestapo)
Dept (Amt) IV
HEINRICH MUELLER
Chief of Criminal Police (Kripo)
Dept (Amt) V
PANZINGER
(predecessor, Artur Nebe)
Chief of Security Services (SD)
Occupied Territories Dept (Amt) VI
WALTER SCHELLENBERG
Chief of Ideological Research
Dept (Amt) VII
DITTEL (predecessor: Six)

HEADS OF THE ARMED SERVICES

Supreme Commander
ADOLF HITLER
Senior Officer
Reichsmarschall HERMANN GOERING
CinC. Army
ADOLF HITLER
(predecessors: Walter von
Brauchitsch, Werner von Fritsch)
CinC. Navy
KARL DOENITZ
(predecessor, Erich Raeder)

Chief of the High Command of the
Armed Forces (OKW)
WILHELM KEITEL
Chief of the Operations Staff
ALFRED JODL



The invasion of the Soviet Union brought unparalleled human suffering. Crops were destroyed, the infrastructure shattered. Civilians displaced from the war zones ran into the tens of millions, and many of those forced out would die of exposure.

OCCUPATION

The Nazi occupation of Eastern Europe was not gentle. Its resources and population were to be bled dry, leaving the land free to be settled by deserving Aryans, as Hitler had promised in *Mein Kampf*.

18 HITLER'S THIRD REICH

THE GERMAN occupation in the East was coloured by the *Generalplan Ost* – the 'General Plan for the East'. This policy document was commissioned by Heinrich Himmler and prepared by Professor Meyer-Hetling of the *Reichskommissariat für die Festigung des Deutschen Volkstums* – the Reich Commission for Strengthening German National Character. The *Generalplan* dealt with the legal, economic and territorial principles of the buildup in the east. Alfred Rosenberg, the Baltic-born *Reichsminister für die Ostgebiete* or Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories, and the NSDAP Office for Racial Policies also collaborated so that the plan became Nazi policy.

In simple terms the plan was the blueprint for enforcing Adolf Hitler's demands for *Lebensraum* or 'living space', a key part of his world view as written nearly 20 years earlier in *Mein Kampf*.

After the invasion of 22 June 1941, the territory captured by the German forces was divided into three zones. The Bialystock District was attached to the *Generalgouvernement* which controlled what remained of Poland. The *Reichskommissariat Ostland* which covered Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and western Belarus was under the administration of Hinrich Lohse, while the *Reichskommissariat Ukraine* was controlled by Erich Koch.

As the three German Army Groups penetrated into the USSR at the beginning of Operation

Barbarossa, they were followed by four *Einsatzgruppen* and a number of *Einsatzkommandos*. Made up from men of the SIPO (State and Criminal Police) and the SD, their mission was stated as being to operate against 'individuals hostile to the Reich'. In fact, their true task was the wholesale execution of Jews, intellectuals and Communist functionaries. In the first year of the war in the East, the murder squads had killed as many as a million people.

LONG-TERM PLANS

The *Generalplan Ost* was no spur of the moment thing. After the war had been won in the east, it stated, the 31 million Slavic inhabitants of Poland, the Baltic region and the western territories of the USSR would be forcibly



The hanging of an alleged partisan has become an entertainment. Here German soldiers, brutalised by the conflict on the Russian Front, take photographs of the execution. Soldiers found with such ghoulish mementos could expect harsh treatment on capture.

IN THE EAST

moved to Siberia and eliminated. Some 14 million 'Germanisable' Balts and Ukrainians "belonging to the Nordic or Dinaric races" would be involved in extending the border of the German *Volk-nation* a thousand kilometres to the east. They were intended to be the underclass for the new aristocracy, the settlers who were to move into the new lands from the Reich and from ethnic German areas of the South Tyrol, Romania, Hungary, Scandinavia, Holland – and a newly conquered Great Britain. In a process envisaged as lasting 25 years the settlers would ensure the 'Germanization' of the area west of the Urals.

The outer borders would be protected by 36 settlement hubs, each with a population of 20,000 which would in turn be

surrounded by a ring of villages.

The plan was to shift the 'geopolitical wind direction' towards the east, and so fulfil Hitler's dream – first proposed in *Mein Kampf* – of *Lebensraum* or living space in the east.

GARDEN OF EDEN

The speed of the German Armies' advance into the Soviet Union and the vast areas that quickly fell under their control prompted a particularly hubristic outburst by Hitler at a meeting on 16 July 1941. He told Bormann, Goering, Keitel, Lammers and Rosenberg, "We must make of the newly-acquired Eastern areas a Garden of Eden... We can nevertheless take all necessary measures – shooting, resettlement, etc – and we shall take them... In principle we have now to face the task of

cutting the giant cake according to our needs, in order to be able, first to dominate, second to administer, and third to exploit it.

"Never again must it be possible to create a military power west of the Urals... We must never permit anybody but the Germans to carry arms!"

GERMAN CONQUERORS

In 1941 the 41.9 million men and women of the Ukraine saw the invading German forces as liberators. The camera crews of the *Propagandakompanien* filmed Ukrainian peasant women standing by the dusty roads blessing German men and vehicles as they streamed eastwards. It was a view they were not to hold for long.

Rosenberg realised that the Ukrainians were potential allies

and proposed that an independent satellite state be formed. This was rejected by Hitler on racial and economic grounds. The Ukrainians were sub-humans, he asserted, and he wished to exploit the rich mineral, agricultural and industrial resources of the area. He also wished to set in motion the *Generalplan Ost*.

The Ukraine was split into three sectors. The land closest to the front came under direct military rule. Galicia and Volhynia were added to other occupied Polish territory as the fifth district of the *General-gouvernement* ruled by Hans Frank from Cracow. His attitude to the people in his domain was reflected in a speech delivered on 14 January 1944: "Once we have won the war, then for all I care, mincemeat can be made of the



LIFE WITHOUT CIVILIANS AND THE GERMAN OCCUPATION



Above: German security forces were ostensibly engaged in operations against 'individuals hostile to the Reich'. Four Einsatzgruppen were formed and assigned to follow the Wehrmacht in the East.



Above: The mobile killing units were enthusiastically assisted by police reserve battalions, Waffen-SS special assignment battalions, local militia groups and Hilfswillige or 'volunteer helpers'.

Below: Killing hostages was forbidden by the Hague Convention, which stated: "No collective penalty can be decreed against populations for individual acts for which they cannot be held jointly responsible." The Germans did not consider that the Convention applied in the East.



Poles and the Ukrainians and all the others who run around here?"

The bulk of the Ukraine came under the administration of *Gauleiter* Erich Koch and the *Reichskommissariat* Ukraine. Koch was a crude and brutal man, a fanatical Nazi who set up his headquarters in the Volhynian city of Równo (Rivne). He described himself as a "brutal dog" whose task was "to suck from Ukraine all the goods we can get hold of, without consideration for the feelings or the property of the Ukrainians".

He declared, "if I find a

Ukrainian who is worthy of sitting at the same table with me, I must have him shot".

Koch with his toothbrush moustache and brown uniform with red arm band was the most extreme example of *Goldfasan* – 'Golden Pheasants' as front line soldiers called the party administrators in the East. His brutality was so extreme that it even provoked opposition from the *Waffen-SS*.

UKRAINIAN SLAUGHTER

He applied a wholesale policy of Germanisation. He closed schools

on the grounds that Ukrainians had no need of education, had thousands deported for slave labour in the Reich and was responsible for the shipment of countless numbers to the extermination camps.

The Ukraine suffered particularly harshly in World War II. For every village that was destroyed in the West, like Oradour in France or Lidice in Czechoslovakia, some 250 suffered a similar fate in the Ukraine. An estimated 16,000 industrial plants and 28,000 collective farms were destroyed,

and direct material damage to the Ukraine constituted over 40% of the USSR's wartime losses.

By the end of the war starvation, executions and death in combat had killed over seven million Ukrainians.

BALTIC ENTHUSIASM

The Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia were not reluctant parts of *Ostland*. All had been occupied by the USSR between June 1940 and June 1941, and saw the Germans as liberators. In Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia police, military and

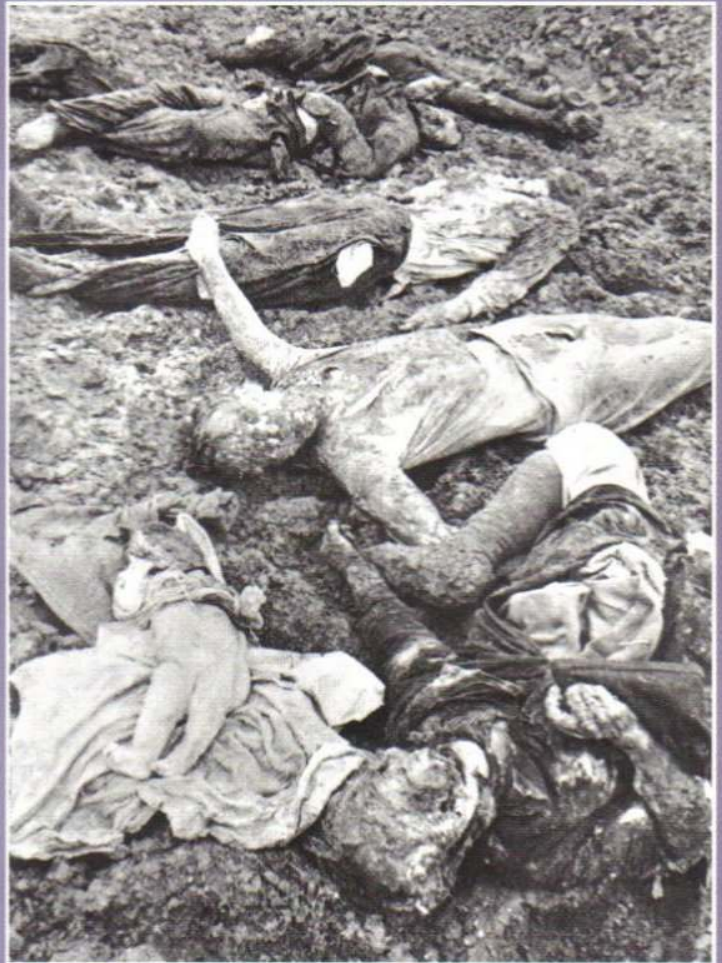


VALUE



Above: At his trial, SS Gruppenführer Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski testified: "If for years a doctrine is preached that the Slav race is inferior and the Jews are not even human beings, an explosion of this sort (that is, the annihilation of a population without remorse) is inevitable".

Below: Jew and Christian alike were victims of Nazi outrages. The Germans carried out 2,322 mass executions in Poland, resulting in the deaths of 34,908 people. Eight thousand were accounted for in the last four months of 1939. Most were killed without any process of law.



Above: The Führer Befehl concerning the suppression of partisans gave German units 'carte blanche' authority to commit the worst atrocities against civilians on the flimsiest of pretexts. In the ever-intensifying partisan war, neutrality was impossible.

Below: German troops attended courses given by senior officers in the Geheime Feld Polizei or Secret Field Police the better to tackle the partisan 'menace'. Attendees were told that the Russians were subhuman, that the majority should be destroyed and that those who were spared should be employed by the Germans as slaves. Such dicta were put into practice by many members of the regular army.





Above: Hitler Jugend are pictured training to be settlers of the new eastern territories. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler wrote: "If new territory is required it can be secured at the expense of Russia. The new empire must move along the paths trodden by the Teutonic Knights, this time to acquire soil for the German plough by means of the German sword."

Below: The German invaders were the harbingers of death and devastation throughout the East. Goering addressed a conference of German occupation authorities in August 1942: "God knows you are not sent there to work for the welfare of the people in your charge but to get the utmost out of them so that the German people can live."

Waffen-SS units were formed from the population and the Jewish population collected in ghettos in Wilno and Kaunas in Lithuania, Riga in Latvia. The small Jewish population of Estonia was deported and exterminated. The Latvians produced six regiments for the Waffen-SS, the Estonians three and the Lithuanians two. The Latvians were grouped as the VI-Freiw-Armeekorps (Lettisches)/VI. Waffen-Armeekorps der SS (Lettisches).

RUSSIAN KILLERS

Incredibly, even the Russians volunteered to serve with German forces. For some PoWs this was the only way to survive. Others were pressed into service soon after they were captured. In the opening days of Barbarossa German MG34 crews co-opted Soviet prisoners as ammunition carriers and these men plodded along with their German captors burdened with boxes of linked 7.92mm ammunition.

The most important Soviet soldier to side with the Germans was the tall, bespectacled Lt-General Andrey Vlasov. The general had an exemplary military record in the defence of Moscow, but he was captured near Leningrad in 1942.

He was disenchanted both with Stalin's leadership and the lack of support for troops in the field, and decided to give support to the anti-Communist groups in Germany. The Germans used him for propaganda, but only at the end of the war was he given command of the Vlasov Army, a force of two divisions.

But the supporters of the new regime in the Occupied Territories were largely chancers and pragmatists, and stood nothing to gain from their old masters. They were however outnumbered by the opponents of the oppressors. The *Kommissariat* of the Ukraine lasted little over two years, the Soviets reoccupying the territory in the autumn of 1943.

The Ukrainian separatists had by and large been broken by the Nazis and the Soviets were therefore able to absorb the territory back into the Union with little opposition.

In the Baltic states, the early months of 1945 witnessed a huge evacuation of civilians fleeing the promised Soviet retribution. After the 'liberation', the remaining population had to endure the reimposition of a Soviet government, a government which was unlikely to forget the enthusiasm with which these old German territories had welcomed Hitler's Army.





FREIWillIGE

HITLER'S EASTERN VOLUNTEERS

DURING THE WAR, around two million men from the occupied East volunteered to fight under German arms as *Hilfswillige* or *Freiwillige*. Manpower shortages meant that by the end of 1943 many German battalions contained formations of these *Ostruppen*. Like latter-day Roman legionaries, these men fought in practically every theatre where German soldiers were to be found.

The *Hilfswillige* were also assigned non-combat roles, taking on typically civilian police duties. On a more sinister note, volunteers could also be found enthusiastically administering concentration camps, taking part in *Einsatzgruppe* actions and playing a leading role in other 'resettlement' operations.

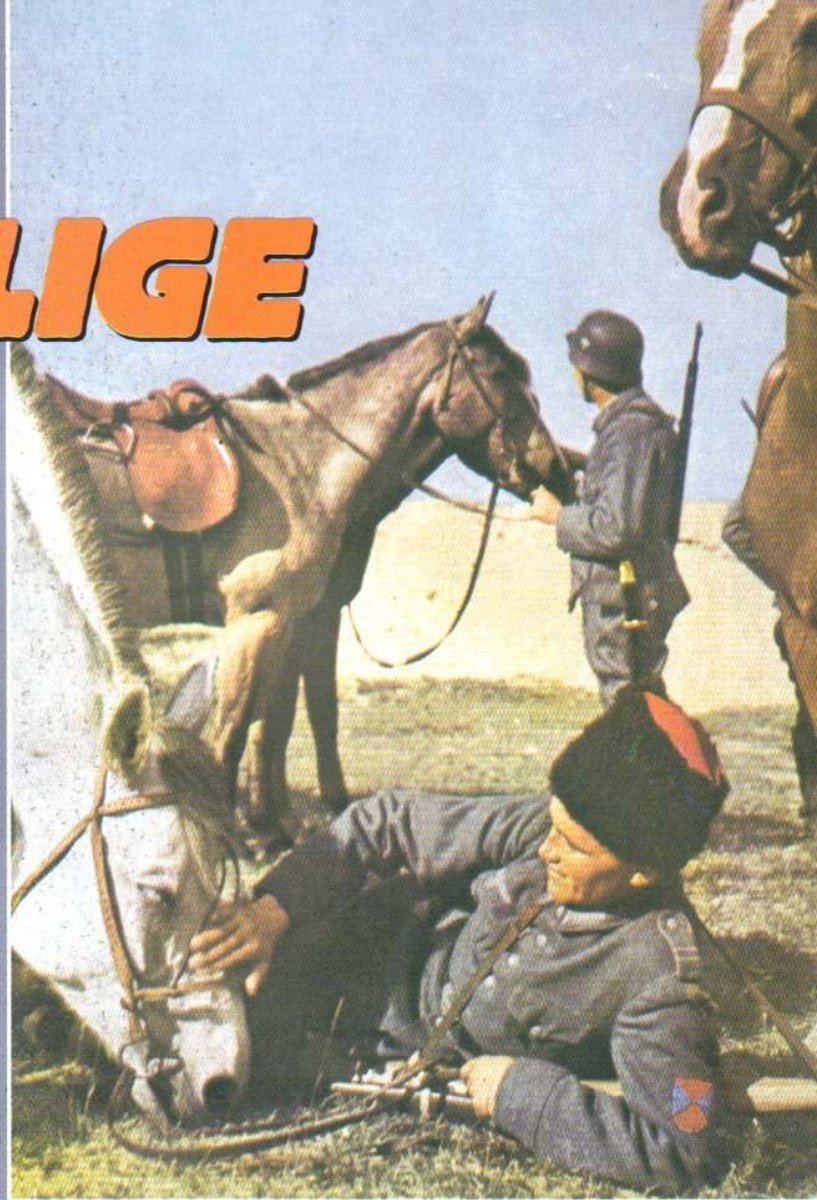
The Wehrmacht established *Freiwilligen Verbände* or field divisions which were composed entirely of eastern nationals. One such was the *Ostlegion*. This consisted of six units drawn from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, North Caucasus, Turkmenistan, and the Volga. In addition a cavalry corps composed of Kalmyks and a Crimean Tartar unit were established. There was a long tradition of hostility to Moscow in these states, which the Germans exploited. Members of the *Ostlegion* were kitted out in standard Wehrmacht field-grey, but displayed armshields which signified an individual's ethnicity. The cadres also had dedicated flags and even their own decorations.

The most well-documented volunteer unit was RONA, the 15th Cossack cavalry corps. It was largely used in reconnaissance and anti-partisan roles in France and Italy. At the conclusion of hostilities, many Cossacks who had been relieved to be captured by British or American forces found themselves handed over to Soviet troops in Austria. Invariably they were then summarily executed.



Left: The fighting quality of Russians volunteering to overthrow Stalin varied markedly. By 1943 there were reportedly some 800,000 former Red Army soldiers fighting for the Wehrmacht on the Eastern Front. In the same year, massive Soviet infiltration of the German lines was blamed on the 'treacherous' behaviour of the Russian volunteers. Hitler flew into a rage and ordered that 80,000 of them be sent immediately to France as coal-diggers. This order was later rescinded, but most Eastern units were moved to secondary fronts, such as Greece and Italy, so depriving them of their raison d'être – the fight against communism.

Right: The independently-inclined cossacks welcomed the invaders with open arms as liberators. German commanders had great respect for the bravery and anti-Soviet zeal of the Cossacks. In total about 250,000 of them served with the Wehrmacht.



Above: Don, Kuban and Siberian Cossacks wore the fur papakha and when available, blue breeches with piping or stripes in the host colours. Terek and Caucasian Cossacks wore the full traditional national costume. German cadre personnel in these units either affected the Cossack look, or retained their German uniforms and rank badges.

Below: On 30 December 1941 a top secret memorandum ordered that the German supreme command was to create the Turkestani legion from volunteers with the following national groups only: Turkomans, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Karakalpaks and Tadjijs.





Heinz Guderian was the creator of the German Panzer arm. One of the few men to be unafraid of Hitler, he did everything possible to make Germany strong again after the humiliation of Versailles.

Heinz Guderian

PANZER LEADER

An outspoken loner, Guderian was the father of the *Panzerwaffe*. Beloved by his men but contemptuous of incompetent superiors, he was one of the few German generals able to stand up to Adolf Hitler.

BORN IN KULM, (Polish Chelmno) on 17 June 1888 Heinz Guderian was the son of a Prussian officer. In his nature he combined the discipline and conformity of the Prussians, with an innovative mind that could find conservative officers maddening. Critics said that he was determined to prove the effectiveness of the tank arm at any price.

Heinz Guderian was educated in cadet school and commissioned into the infantry in the 10th (Hanoverian) *Jäger* regiment in 1908. He attended the *Kriegsakademie* in 1913. He served as a staff officer and communications specialist in World War I, rising through divisional, corps and finally army HQs on the Western Front.

After the war he served briefly in the volunteer armies in the Baltic states fighting to retain the territory wrested from the Russians in the Treaty of Brest Litovsk. He was one of the 4000 officers selected to serve in the *Reichswehr*. During the 1920s and 30s he developed the deep penetration armoured tactics which would become *Blitzkrieg*, and formed the nucleus of a mechanised force.

When Hitler came to power in 1933 he recognised the potential of armoured forces and by 1935 three armoured (Panzer) divisions had been formed. Guderian was given command of the 2nd Panzer Division. He was promoted Major-General in 1936, Lieutenant-General in 1938 and was given the new rank of *General der Panzertruppen* later the same year.

ACHTUNG PANZER

In 1937 his seminal book *Achtung-Panzer!* was published, spelling out his ideas about armoured warfare. During the Blomberg-Fritsch crisis of 1938 Guderian was regarded as pro-Nazi and this went in his favour on the promotion ladder. He commanded the new 16th Corps during the critical days of the



Anschluss with Austria in 1938. His tanks started a motorised dash to Vienna but in the course of it at least a third broke down - it was useful training for more challenging operations.

In 1939 he was given command of the XIX Corps which fought in Poland and France. Hitler visited Guderian in Poland and was impressed by the destructive effectiveness of the Panzers against Polish artillery and infantry positions.

Guderian the World War I signals officer realised that he could command from armoured vehicles on the move and led his corps from the front. His forces spearheaded the attack on the West, punching through the thin French lines at Sedan on 14 May. Though they were actually outnumbered by the Anglo-French forces Guderian's corps raced towards the Channel coast and cutting off Allied armies in northern France and Belgium.

DRIVE FOR THE COAST

Guderian's corps covered the 250 km to the Channel in eight days, averaging 30 km per day and on one day advancing a remarkable 85 km. The speed and audacity of the advance frightened Hitler, who wanted the Panzers to slow down. Guderian was able to bluff Hitler into believing that they had halted by using a field telephone link that was run back to a static radio station as the tanks pushed west.

On 28 May Hitler gave Guderian command of XXXIX and XXXXI Panzer Corps as a *Panzergruppe* for the Battle of France, the drive into France that followed Dunkirk. In six days he took the group from near Sedan south as far as Pontarlier on the Swiss border and then hooked left driving north through ninety degrees to capture Belfort.

Following the fall of France he was promoted Colonel-General. Guderian favoured pursuing a campaign against the British in the Mediterranean but Hitler was committed to the war with the USSR.

For the Russian campaign he



Guderian at the height of his tactical military career, at his command post in the autumn of 1941 on the Russian Front. During Barbarossa he led the 2nd Panzer Army and proved the tank theories that he had consistently advanced in the previous decade.

was given one of the four panzer groups - armoured armies in all but name. The 2nd Panzer Group was subsequently retitled *Panzerarmee* Guderian and then 2nd *Panzerarmee*. The *Panzergruppe* was part of Army Group Centre and under Guderian's command it pushed deep into Russia.

Between 22 June and 16 July his Panzer Group covered 660 km from Brest Litovsk to

Smolensk, averaging over 25 km a day. The best day was on 28 June, when they raced forward over 100 km. The soldiers nicknamed their commander "Fast Heinz"

When his forces were within 200 miles of Moscow Hitler announced that he intended to transfer the tanks to the slower moving Army Group South. Guderian attempted to thwart the Führer's plans and then flew to

Hitler's headquarters to urge him not to adopt a course that would cheat the German army of victory in 1941. He was out talked by Hitler.

By the time his tanks were back on the Moscow front, Guderian realised that they would be obliged to go over onto the defensive since winter was fast approaching and the logistic chain was stretched to its limit. Hitler, who was interfering in



Above: In his book Achtung Panzer Guderian developed his ideas on armoured warfare. He proposed that tanks should operate as part of a combined arms team, with motorised infantry, artillery and engineers.



Above: When pictured with his troops, Guderian would give the propaganda photographers a broad grin. "Follow me and gain glory" he would say. He was rarely seen smiling with his superiors, however.

Below: In the Polish and French campaigns, Guderian led the XIX Panzer Corps with considerable success. Here, in France, he is seen watching one of his orders being encrypted by the top-secret Enigma coding machine used by all senior German commanders.



operational decisions more and more frequently, demanded that the final offensive push on to capture Moscow in spite of the arrival of the fierce winter weather, for which the Wehrmacht was not prepared.

On 5 December, the Soviet Union launched its counter offensive with fresh Siberian troops. The Germans were now fighting a desperate defensive action. Guderian was relieved of his command when in the face of intense Soviet pressure he withdrew his Panzer Group from its exposed position around Tula.

He was brought back from retirement in February 1943 and made Inspector of Armoured Troops. His drive and knowledge in this post were valuable in ensuring that German tank forces would fight the battles of 1943 and 1944 with new vehicles and weapons. The development of the Panther as a counter to the Soviet T-34 owed much to Guderian.

DUTY AND HONOUR

Anti-Hitler plotters made several approaches to Guderian, but were unable to win him over. Guderian

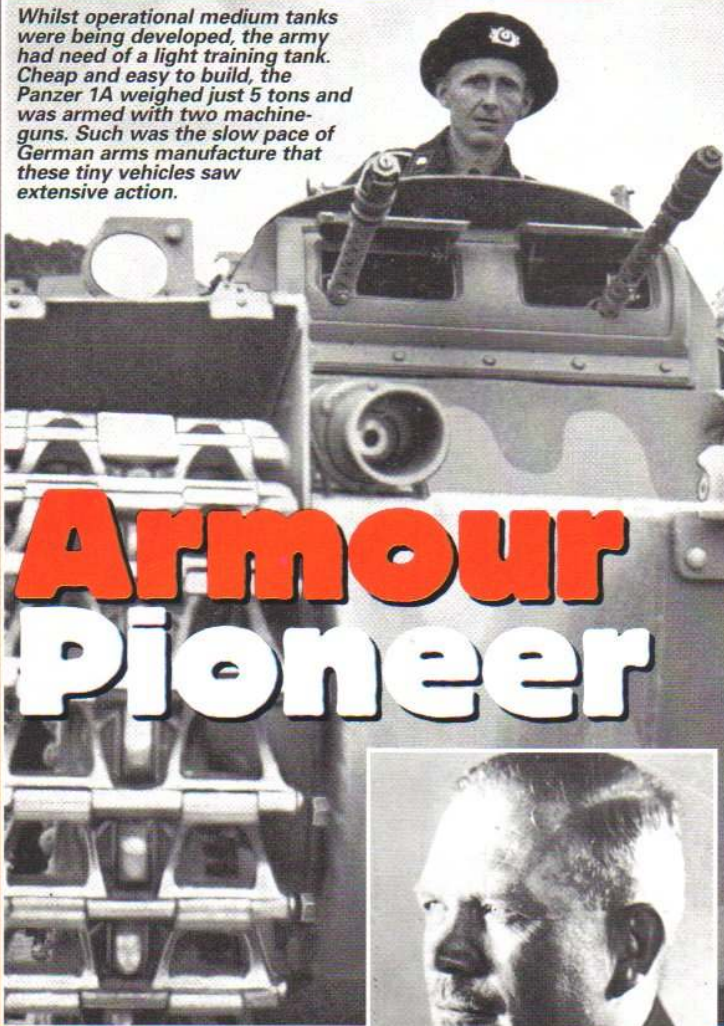
agreed that Hitler's military leadership was disastrous, but would not be drawn into the conspiracy. It has been suggested that his reluctance was in part because the conspirators were part of a conservative and reactionary military class that had blocked many of his tactical innovations during the 1930s.

At the time of the attempt on Hitler's life, Guderian was inspecting troops in East Prussia. In the fall-out from the bomb plot he was promoted Army Chief of Staff and held this post until 22 March 1945. He issued an order of the day denouncing the conspirators as cowards and weaklings who preferred the road of disgrace to the only road open to the honest soldier "the road of duty and honour".

Along with Field Marshals Keitel and von Rundstedt, Guderian was part of the Court of Honour which investigated the officers suspected of involvement in the 1944 July Plot. The court expelled suspects from the Army and sent them for trial in the *Volksgesicht* – People's Court. Senior officers who appeared in



Whilst operational medium tanks were being developed, the army had need of a light training tank. Cheap and easy to build, the Panzer 1A weighed just 5 tons and was armed with two machine-guns. Such was the slow pace of German arms manufacture that these tiny vehicles saw extensive action.



Armour Pioneer



Right: "You hit somebody with your fist and not with your fingers spread". Guderian's words encapsulate his theory on the correct use of armour. You should concentrate your Panzers for one powerful strike, and not fritter them away piecemeal.

the *Volksgesicht* were almost without exception condemned to death.

As Chief of Staff he attempted to drive home to Hitler the disastrous state of the German forces in the East and West. Following an epic shouting-match on 28 March 1945 he was dismissed – Hitler actually told him to take sick leave since it was widely known that he had health problems.

On 10 May 1945 Guderian surrendered to the Americans. He described his rank and position as Inspector of Armoured Troops. After the war he was exonerated of any war crimes by the

Americans and British and released from internment in Neustadt in June 1948 on his 60th birthday. He had suffered from a weak heart and the pressure of the war led to an early death at Schwangau bei Füssen, Bavaria on 15 May 1954.

Right: After 14 months in retirement, Guderian was recalled in the aftermath of Stalingrad. He was appointed Generalinspekteur der Panzertruppen, responsible for modernising the armoured troops. He established an excellent working relationship with Albert Speer, and although exonerated at Nuremberg, Guderian as a frequent visitor to the Reich's factories must have been aware of the appalling conditions endured by slave workers.



Above: Guderian made Blitzkrieg possible by constantly disobeying orders and driving as hard and fast as his tanks could go, cutting enemy communications and spreading havoc. Here Guderian outlines the position of his formations to his superior, Field Marshal von Kluge.

IN 1926 GENERAL VON SEECKT the charismatic leader of Germany's pocket army – the *Reichswehr* – initiated an unofficial program of experimental tank construction.

At the same time, one Major Heinz Guderian was an instructor at the Army's motor transport school. He had a fascination with the armoured concept and went out of his way to gather every available piece of information on motorised warfare.

He developed, initially in the face of some opposition, the idea of using mock-up tanks of sheet metal and wood, to gain experience in armour tactics. He also visited Sweden to investigate a tank battalion, and toured the secret tank testing facility at Kazan in Russia.

Guderian, an English speaker, was a keen disciple of the British

armour theorists, Captain B.H. Liddell-Hart and General J.F.C. Fuller, who both drew on their experiences in the Royal Tank Corps in WWI. Unlike the British, Guderian was to have more success in getting his novel ideas accepted by the General Staff.

In 1931, he was Chief of Staff to General Lutz, Inspector of Motorised Troops. Both men were convinced that the future tactical development of tank forces should involve the formation of armoured divisions.

After seeing some of Guderian's Panzer Is dashing around the training area, soon after coming to power, Hitler enthused and ordered the creation of three Panzer Divisions. One was given to Guderian, who thereafter became synonymous with Hitler's 'Black Hussars'.





An oil-covered survivor from a torpedoed merchantman. He is one of the lucky ones: hundreds of ships sunk meant the death of thousands of seamen, from drowning, burning, or exposure in the bitter Atlantic waters.

Iron Coffins

The Defeat of the U-Boat

By the beginning of 1943, it seemed that the U-boats were winning the battle of the Atlantic. More boats were operational, and Allied ship losses rose catastrophically.



THE SECOND U-boat 'happy time' occurred during the first seven months of 1942. On 13 January, U-boat commanders lying off the American coast received orders to commence hostilities with the USA. Co-ordination between US Army, Navy and civilian administrations was poor: ships were silhouetted by the lights of American towns where 'blackout' was unknown. U-boats remained on the bottom by day, surfacing at dusk to inflict repeated losses on merchant ships still sailing singly and often fully illuminated.

The US authorities took a long time to profit from hard-won and freely-offered British experience. It took until April 1942 for the US Navy to beat back the onslaught, conducted by no more than a dozen submarines at any one time. Monthly losses averaged over a hundred merchant ships totalling 500,000 tons.

U-BOAT STRANGLEHOLD

Imports to Britain continued to decline during 1942, partly because the U-boats were inflicting such heavy attrition in the Atlantic, but also because large quantities of shipping were diverted for the invasion of North Africa (Operation Torch) in November. At the same time the US counter-offensive in the Pacific absorbed considerable quantities of US hulls. From a pre-war total of 50 million tons a year, British imports fell to 42 million in 1940; 31 million in 1941; and 23 million tons during 1942 – which was too little to keep the country going.

Although Hitler's armies ended the year on the ropes in both Russia and North Africa, the citizens of Great Britain faced even more stringent rationing and British war industries were threatened with a lack of raw materials. Prime Minister Winston Churchill remained highly concerned about the U-boat threat, and it was agreed at the highest levels that the Allies' top priority for 1943 was

the defeat of the U-boats. Until they were mastered, the build-up of US forces in Britain was in peril and the prospects for a successful invasion of mainland Europe remote.

ATTACK THE BASES

From the autumn of 1942 U-boat bases in France and shipyards in Germany were targeted with great energy by RAF Bomber Command and the US 8th Air Force. Enormous destruction was caused to the ports, which were easier to locate than cities inland. Lorient and St Nazaire were levelled; but, secure in their concrete pens, the U-boats were unharmed. This effort was criticised at the time (and since) as a waste of effort: diverting a fraction of the four-engined bombers to anti-submarine patrols would have had far greater effect.

To be fair, the success rate of ASW aircraft had not been great, with hardly a kill confirmed since the beginning of the war, so the bomber chiefs' argument that it was better to attack the U-boats in their lair, rather than search for them mid-Ocean seemed to make sense at the time. Doenitz shared the view that submarines at sea could avoid air attack. Neither party knew that developments in airborne radar, depth charges and homing torpedoes were poised to make aircraft the greatest threat to the U-boat.

HARD FACTS

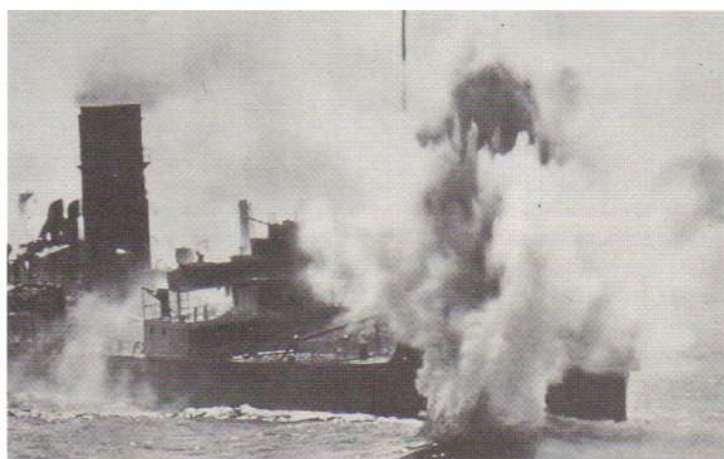
In fact, the cold arithmetic of the Battle of the Atlantic was already turning in the Allies' favour. In the summer of 1942 the average number of merchant ships sunk had fallen to less than one per U-boat sortie. And the U-boat hit rate dropped from 0.91 ships per sortie in July/August to 0.65 in September and 0.63 in November. Half of all U-boat sorties produced no results at all. The Type VII and Type IX submarines required urgent modernisation or, better, replacement by more modern designs.

Admiral Doenitz planned one more major effort to break the



Above: The U-boat war was one of move and countermove, with both sides bringing in new weapons to counter the last enemy ploy. But Allied air power was the one thing which the Kriegsmarine could not match.

Below: A damaged merchant ship, unable to keep up with its convoy, is sunk by gunfire. U-boats pounced on such stragglers like wolves, but increased Allied defences meant that such surface attacks were very risky.



Atlantic lifeline with his older boats, before refitting them with new weapons and sensors. However, Hitler ordered him to attack the Allied landings in North Africa. U-boats were ordered into the Mediterranean, which Doenitz regarded as a lost cause. Twenty-five U-boats of the Atlantic force were sent to North African waters, where the Allies had concentrated their air and surface ASW forces to protect the troop transports. Eight U-boats were damaged and three lost with all hands in exchange for just eleven Allied ships. The submarines failed to disrupt the amphibious assault, which overran Algeria and soon reduced Axis presence in North Africa to a bridgehead in Tunisia.

Most U-boats that sailed in January 1943 carried improved torpedoes. The G7a could be set to run in a pattern, looping around inside a convoy until it hit something. A few carried the G7e which homed in on the sound of a ship's propellers. The T-5, which entered service that summer, was a faster version, capable of 24 knots and intended as the standard anti-escort weapon. Deck guns were removed in favour of increased anti-aircraft armament. Passive sonar, capable of detecting ships at up to 20 miles was fitted in an array along the port and starboard bow sections.

However, the Allies were poised to counter with new types of airborne radar, undetectable

HITLER'S BATTLES 17



Left: When it came to detecting the enemy, the U-boats were at a disadvantage. Allied sub-hunters could find U-boats with radar and HF radio direction-finding equipment, but to find convoys the U-boat had primarily to rely on radio messages from France and the Mark I human eyeball.

Right: Fuel-efficient diesel engines enabled U-boats to range far and wide in the search for victims, but their need for air also tied the boats to the surface for long periods.

Below: Merchant seamen at least had a chance of reaching lifeboats when hit by torpedoes; a depth-charged U-boat crew had far less chance of survival.



by the Germans' Metox FuMB warning gear (the 'Biscay Cross'). Additionally, High-Frequency Direction-Finding equipment (HF/DF or 'Huff-Duff') would enable Royal Navy escort vessels to run down a line of bearing to catch U-boats making the long radio transmissions that were such a feature of 'Wolfpack' tactics.

The *Kriegsmarine* was woefully behind the Allies in the use of radar at sea and it was not until mid-1943 that some U-boats received a primitive search radar, a conversion of a Luftwaffe system. Defensive measures were more advanced: U-boats were provided with Aphrodite, a radar reflecting balloon that moved across the surface of the sea, and Thetis, a radar-reflecting buoy designed to draw the enemy's attention while the U-boat slipped away.

In winter 1942-43 technology took second place to the elements in the North Atlantic. It was the worse winter in living memory. Convoys had to heave-to in

ferocious gales that could last a week or more. U-boats pitched violently on the surface, the watch peering into binoculars while clinging to the bridge, trusting to the safety harness to save them when green water swallowed the whole boat. U-boats sought relief from the mountainous seas by diving deep below the tempest, but they could find no targets there.

90 BOATS AT SEA

As the winter gales finally subsided, the U-boat arm at last achieved the numbers Doenitz had demanded before the war to achieve the economic blockade of the UK. The Atlantic force rose from 157 boats to 186 by May 1943, with numbers at sea rising from 61 in January to 90 in April. Four convoys were attacked with particular effect in March 1943: 39 out of the 200 merchantmen were sunk.

Doenitz scented victory – though exaggerated claims by his skippers contributed to a sense of triumph which was premature. By

contrast, Churchill was dismayed, though President Roosevelt responded by allocating 150 new ships from US yards for British use. The British Official History would refer to this time as the 'crisis of crises' in the Atlantic.

The U-boats sank a total of 84 merchant ships in the Atlantic during March, as well as the escort *Harvester*, sunk by *U 432*. Eleven ships were sunk in the Indian Ocean by long range Type IXDs, 12 in the Mediterranean and three in the Arctic. Doenitz, who focussed entirely on tonnage sunk, chalked up some 750,000 tons, though the true figure was 635,000 tons.

The secret war was also going the German way. German *B-dienst* (signals intelligence) teams were reading the Allied naval codes, enabling Doenitz to position his patrols across the paths of the convoys. At the same time, changes to the German Enigma code procedures left the Allied codebreakers at Bletchley Park blind, so chillingly described in Robert Harris's

novel *Enigma*. U-boat captains concentrated their attentions on the 'air gap' southeast of Greenland where, apart from a handful of RAF Coastal Command B-24s in Iceland, no Allied aircraft had the range to cover. The presence of two Type XIV U-boat tankers (*U 461* and *U 463*) enabled many Type VII boats to remain on station for longer than usual.

TURN OF THE TIDE

The sudden rise in U-boat successes ended as quickly as it began. The weather improved, enabling the escort carriers attached to ASW groups to get their aircraft into the sky. Four such groups were in the mid-Atlantic by May, and many more land-based ASW aircraft roved above the convoys. Radar and HF/DF sets enabled escort vessels to engage submarines more often, and torpex-filled depth charges, more than 50% more powerful than conventional munitions, made attacks more lethal. Forward-firing mortars



Climax in the Atlantic

There were more than 200 convoy routes designated by the Allies during World War II, about half of which were attacked by U-boats. Most were known by two letters often indicating the starting and finishing ports. Each of the important routes was used by more than 100 convoys before 1945.

AS USA - Freetown
BRN Brazilian coastal
BT Bahia - Trinidad
BTC UK coastal
BX Boston - Halifax
CU Caribbean - UK (tankers)
DN Durban - North
EBC Channel
ECP Channel (Invasion convoys)
EMC Channel (Invasion convoys)
ET North Africa - Gibraltar
ETC Channel
FN Freetown - Natal
FXP Channel (Invasion convoys)
Gibr Canaries - Gibraltar (coastal)
GTX Gibraltar - Tripoli - Alexandria
GUS Gibraltar - USA (slow)
HA Tripoli - Augusta
HG Gibraltar - UK
HN Bergen - Methil
HX Halifax/New York - UK

JT Rio de Janeiro - Trinidad
JW Loch Ewe - Kola Fjord
KG Key West - Guantanamo
KJ Kingston - Europe
KMF UK - Mediterranean (fast)
KMS UK - Mediterranean (slow)
KRS UK - North Africa
KS Casablanca - Brest/St Nazaire
LMD Lorenzo Marques - Durban
MH UK coastal
MKF Mediterranean - UK (fast)
MKS Mediterranean - UK (slow)
NG New York - Guantanamo
OA UK - Outward (N. America)
OB UK - Outward (N. America)
OG UK - Gibraltar
ON(F) UK - North America (fast)
ONS UK - North America (slow)
OS UK - Freetown
OT New York - North West Africa
PG Panama - Guantanamo
PK Petsamo (Kirkenes) - Kola Fjord
PQ Iceland - North Russia
QP North Russia - Iceland
QS Quebec - Sydney
RA Kola Fjord - Loch Ewe
RB St. Lawrence - UK
RS Gibraltar - Sierra Leone
RU Reykjavik - UK
SC Sydney - UK

SG Sydney - Greenland
SL Sierra Leone (Freetown) - UK
SQ Sydney - Quebec
TA UK - USA
TAG Trinidad - Aruba - Guantanamo
TAM Gibraltar - UK
TB Trinidad - Bahia
TBC UK coastal
TJ Trinidad - Rio de Janeiro
TM Trinidad - Gibraltar
TS Takoradi - Freetown
UC UK - Caribbean
UGF USA - Gibraltar (fast)
UGS USA - Gibraltar (slow)
UR UK - Reykjavik
UT USA - UK
VWP UK coastal
WAT Key West - Aruba - Trinidad
WEG UK coastal
WS UK - Middle East
XB Halifax - Boston
XK Gibraltar - UK

Right: Karl Doenitz was one of the few senior Nazis who knew how to defeat the British, but he could not match the resources thrown into the Battle of the Atlantic by the Allies.





Left: Erich Topp knew that the U-boats had lost the battle in 1943, but he continued to go to sea out of a sense of duty. One of the few aces to survive the war, he was to rise to high-rank in the NATO era Bundesmarine.

Right: By the middle of 1943, convoy air cover meant that U-boats could only hope to succeed by attacking submerged. But on batteries, old-style boats were too slow and had too little range.

Below: Fortunately for the Allies, advanced boats like the Type XXI, which was faster underwater than on the surface, came too late to make a difference to the war. This example was given to the US Navy for post-war research.



('Hedgehog') and a 2,000 lb (900 kg) torpedo tube-launched 'super depth charge' further increased the chance of a 'kill'. Allied aircraft patrolling over Biscay, caught new U-boat skippers on their first patrol and tired crews on their way home after gruelling weeks at sea. The code-breakers cracked Enigma again, and in June, the British abandoned naval code no. 3 after positive proof it was compromised.

U-boat losses soared: in the first three weeks of May, 15 were sunk and another 15 damaged and compelled to abort their patrols. In April/May, 58 boats were lost – 53 in the Atlantic. Doenitz' youngest son Peter was among the 1,500 U-boat crewmen killed.

At the Admiral's headquarters consideration was given to abandoning the campaign; decorated skippers Erich Topp and Reinhard Suhren argued that there was no prospect of success, at least, not with the submarines currently in service.

In his memoirs, Doenitz describes it as a 'bitter decision' to

fight on. His objective was to force the Allies to continue to devote resources to convoy defence, and to train crews for the next U-boat generation. In other words, he would continue sending out crews to almost certain death, while promising future 'wonder weapons' to reverse the tide of war.

His once towering reputation among his men was diminished; some of the more jaded officers wondered if Doenitz, now commander-in-chief of the *Kriegsmarine*, had not spent so long with Hitler he became infected. One disillusioned propaganda writer survived a disastrous U-boat patrol to write the famous novel *Das Boot*. (Although perversely, it is set in 1941 when U-boat morale was at its highest.) Others unwisely spoke out at the time. Doenitz once intervened to save the reputation, if not the life of one *Ritterkreuz* holder, Heinrich Bleichrodt who resigned his commission in *U 109* mid-Atlantic. But the 25-year-old commander of *U 154*, Oskar

Heinz Kusch was shot by firing squad for making disparaging remarks about Hitler. Erich Topp wondered whether Doenitz was "so naïve he did not know what people were saying in the U-boat messes about the Party and the Grofaz' (*Großtes Feldherr in Alles Zeit* – an early propaganda description of Hitler as the Greatest Military Commander of All Time used scornfully later in the war). As an admiral in the *Bundesmarine* after the war, Topp tried to get Kusch rehabilitated, but die-hard elements in the naval veterans movement were able to stop him.

MOST CONVOYS ARE SAFE

The heavy losses suffered by Halifax 228 and 229 and slow convoys 121 and 122 obscured the fact that eleven other convoys arrived safely. In the first quarter of 1943, 95% of shipping completed the Atlantic run. The U-boats sank 264 ships during this period, totalling 1.5 million tons; meanwhile US shipyards built 546 ships totalling 3.5 million tons.

From then on, the graphs at Doenitz's headquarters and the Admiralty charted a remorseless drop in U-boat sinkings. The campaign would continue until the last day of the war, but the Type XXI 'electroboote' did not enter service until 1945, largely due to the Allied strategic bombing campaign. The *schmorkel*, introduced to enable Type VIIIs and Type IXs to remain submerged for most of a patrol, never worked successfully. 'Snorting' U-boats made so much noise, they could not detect a convoy – or an escort thundering down having detected the radar reflection from the *schmorkel*.

In March 1945, 29 Type VII U-boats sortied from their bases in Norway to attack shipping around the UK, 15 of them new boats on their maiden patrol. They accounted for nine ships, but 17 of the submarines were sunk; 54 crew men were captured, 746 killed. The dedication of Hitler's U-boat fleet outlasted that of the Führer himself, but it had lost the war more than two years earlier.



An American-built Consolidated PBY Catalina in service with RAF Coastal Command drops a depth charge. Anti-submarine aircraft were the biggest threat to U-boats: they could cover an enormous area of sea on a patrol and attack with greater speed than a surface vessel.

Hunter Killers



Left and above left: Having produced sufficient vessels to give every convoy a close escort, the Allies then developed specialised anti-submarine groups, often based on escort carriers, whose sole function was to chase down and sink U-boats.



Above and left: Depth charges dropped by a Sunderland flying boat ring a Type IX U-boat, ripping through its pressure hull and forcing the crew to take to the water in their life jackets.

Right: Crew at least had the chance to escape from U-boats on the surface: once underwater, chances were almost nil. Survival depended on being somewhere near an escape hatch, with underwater breathing gear, and getting out before the boat sank too far. Very few managed it.





As the war turned against Germany, its leaders placed their hopes in a series of 'wonder weapons' which would finally win the war for the Reich. In spite of some real scientific achievements, they hoped in vain.

VENGEANCE WEAPONS

Seen on its mobile rail launcher, the mighty A-4 rocket was one of the most astonishing advances in the history of weapons technology. But in spite of its unstoppable performance and the destruction it caused, the cost of the project nearly bankrupted the Third Reich.



ON THE NIGHT OF the 12 June 1944 – just six days after the Allied invasion of France – British anti-aircraft

observers heard an unusual noise in the sky. The loud droning buzz came from a small, cross-shaped aeroplane trailing a tail of fire.

Travelling fast, it seemed to be heading for London. Those watchers did not know it but they were looking at the first manifestation of a new kind of warfare.

The tide of war had turned against the Nazis, and Hitler looked to desperate measures to strike back at the Allies. The strange flying bomb was just the first of his vengeance weapons. Soon another even more terrifying threat – the ballistic rocket – was to menace Allied cities.

As Allied armies closed inexorably on the borders of the Reich, Hitler and his followers began to pin their hopes upon two new 'wonder weapons'.

The V-1 was a pilotless flying bomb. Known to the Allies as the Doodlebug, or Buzz bomb, it carried a heavy warhead and was designed to strike at targets from a range of more than 200 kilometres. The Luftwaffe's planners felt that it would be all but impossible to stop. They were wrong.

But the V-1 was soon to be joined by another weapon against which defences were powerless. On 8 September, Chiswick in West London was rocked by a mysterious explosion. Over the next few weeks it became apparent that the buzz-bomb was not the only new vengeance weapon: the long-range ballistic missile had arrived in the form of the hypersonic V-2.

V-1 IN ACTION

The first aerial self-guided missile to be used in combat, this cruise missile got its popular designation V-1 from *Vergeltungswaffe* or 'reprisal weapon', though its true designation was Fieseler Fi 103.



Vengeance Weapon 1, the world's first operational cruise missile, was a fairly crude unmanned aircraft which some members of the Luftwaffe staff thought would take the place of the bomber. Over 8,000 were launched between June and September, but about half were intercepted by British defences.

It was also given the cover designation FZG 76 (anti-aircraft target 76).

Its development started in 1942 when *Generalfeldmarschall* Milch authorised the Schmidt pulsejet, a novel form of jet engine, to be used to propel a cheaply produced 'flying bomb'. The first powered flight was on 24 December 1942, and after many delays the bombardment of London began in the summer of 1944.

By April, 1944, *Flakregiment* 155 was in place in France but it was understrength. This caused delays in setting up launch sites. Things changed after 6 June. V-1s and all necessary supplies were rushed to the forward zones after the Allied landings in Normandy.

The long-delayed operational debut came on the night of 12-13 June. It was an inauspicious beginning: so many launch sites had been damaged that only ten missiles were launched, of which seven crashed. Three days later it

was very different. On the night of 15-16 June, 244 bombs were fired from 55 sites, and by 21 June over 1,000 V-1s had droned and buzzed their way towards England.

The V-1 was most erratic and imprecise, but London was an ideal target.

Nobody who lived through the V-weapon bombardment of 1944 could forget the loud throb of the approaching missile, the sudden silence as the engine cut out, and the tremendous explosion a few seconds later as the missile hit the ground.

AIR-LAUNCH

Missiles were also launched from the air by Heinkel bombers. Although numbers were not high, these were active for most of the second half of 1944.

The start of the V-1 campaign was seen as a major success by the Luftwaffe. Congratulations poured in from all quarters, even from officials who had previously

opposed the scheme. In view of this change in fortune, Hitler himself approved the formation of two new V-1 batteries.

Allied air attacks on the sites themselves were not as successful as had been hoped. Attacks on supply routes were much more effective, and delivery of V-1s to the launch sites fell short of the Regiment's capacity for firing them.

Even worse, British ground forces were pushing north out of the Normandy beachhead, capturing sites along the way. By 1 September 1944 Operation *Rumpelkammer* was over.

In just over two months, more than 8,500 V-1s had been launched. However, the V-1 had never been as effective as the Germans believed. Fighter, anti-aircraft and balloon barrage defences proved to be increasingly effective countermeasures.

Just under half of the V-1s crossing the coast were destroyed

Inside the V-1

THE RATIONALE behind the development of the flying bomb is not really clear. In part, it was designed to meet one of the Luftwaffe's original mission requirements, to serve as very long range artillery in support of the Wehrmacht in attack.

However, by the time it came into service, the Wehrmacht was doing very little attacking. Another faction among the weapon's high-ranking supporters knew that German bomber programmes lagged far behind those of the Allies.

They had hopes that the V-1, which needed a minimum amount of development and construction, might prove a cheap alternative to the manned bomber. Whatever the reason, the development of the V1 went forward at an incredible pace.

In 1942 *Generalfeldmarschall* Erhard Milch, the Secretary of State for Air, visited the German Army Research Institute at Peenemünde. He was there to see a demonstration firing of A3 and A5 missiles.

Milch did not like the fact that the Army was making such progress in developing long-range weaponry. He issued a requirement for a rival long-range weapon for the Luftwaffe. An expendable unmanned aircraft would be quickest and easiest to develop.

Gerhard Fieseler Werke of Kassel drew up rough designs to fulfil the requirement. Fieseler's scheme was based upon use of the Argus As 014 pulse jet unit for propulsion. The pulse jet was a very simple concept: air from the intake passed through one-way valves, mixed with fuel and ignited.

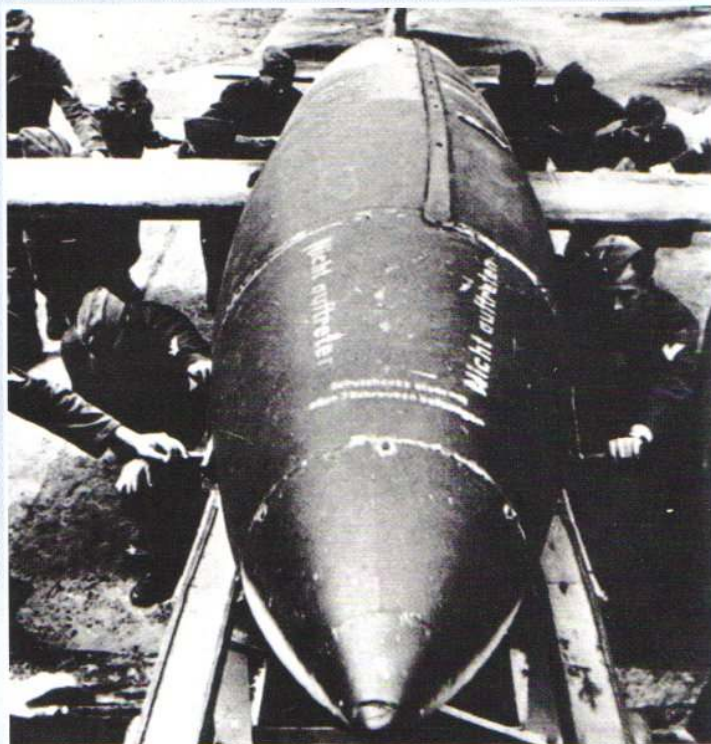
The explosion closed the valves and burst out of the rear of the 'stove pipe'. Once the pressure dropped, the valves could open. The whole sequence repeated itself several times per second.

The Fieseler proposal was known as the Fi 103. It was accepted by the Luftwaffe High Command, and a team under former Heinkel engineer Robert Lüsser started on the design of the fuselage and control system. A development team was immediately established at Peenemünde. Its leader, engineer Temme, was given far-reaching powers to conscript whatever manpower or equipment he considered necessary.

The result was a small pilotless aircraft with a wing span of just over five metres. The Argus pulse jet was mounted above the rear of fuselage.

Simplicity was the key. The Luftwaffe stipulated that the flying bomb had to be easy to assemble and to maintain, and to use the minimum number of parts.

The missile had a small windmill in the nose which powered an air log. This measured the distance travelled, and at a predetermined distance, cut off the fuel to the engine. It also commanded the weapon



to dive. The air log gave erratic and imprecise measurements. However, it was to prove accurate enough to hit a target the size of London.

Also at Peenemünde, Section E8 was created, which was tasked with designing the launch gear, support vehicles and other ancillary equipment. The launch gear was important, since the pulse jet engine needed to be at flying speed before it would work.

To get the missile into the air, it was catapulted along an inclined ramp by a chemically-powered piston. It took less than a month to progress from the first glide test to the first powered ramp launch, which took place on Christmas Eve, 1942.

Over the next months, many missiles were launched, some even reaching the south coast of Sweden. In July 1943, one missile managed to hit within 800 metres of its designated target, more than 200 kilometres from launch.



Left: A Supermarine Spitfire rolls away after tipping the wing of a V-1 in flight. The missile's speed of up to 400 mph (690 km/h) was close to the maximum that piston-powered fighters could achieve at low level, but late-model Spitfires, Mustangs, Tempests and the new Meteor jets shot-down 1,847 flying bombs.

Below left: Initially, the V-1s were to be launched from huge concrete ramps built in the Pas de Calais. These proved easy to detect from the air, however, and an intensive bombing campaign destroyed most of the sites. Later V-1s were launched from simple wooden ramps.



by aircraft or anti-aircraft fire, and many went astray, exploding in open country. Unfortunately, those which did get through were enough to kill 6,000 people, 5,000 in London alone.

But if the V-1 could be countered by conventional means, against the V-2 there was no defence. The missile travelled so fast that it arrived and exploded before the whooshing sound of its dive onto the target could be

heard by its unfortunate victims.

The Peenemünde A4 was unquestionably the greatest single thrust into the unknown in the history of technology, and its development resulted in a weapon against which there was no defence. At the same time, it did little to stave off the defeat of Nazi Germany – indeed, the large resources committed to it might have been put to better use.

LONG HISTORY

Although the V-2 became operational after the Luftwaffe's much simpler V-1, development had in fact begun much earlier. German work on liquid-propellant rockets was inspired by the writings of Hermann Oberth, and practical experiments began in the 1920s, carried out by enthusiasts at the VfR (Society for Spaceflight). One of the leading engineers was a young Prussian aristocrat named Werner von Braun.

Engineering the V-2

THE TASK of engineering a scaled up A5 as a viable military rocket was daunting – to say the least. Whereas the test rocket had weighed just over one tonne, the A4 had a projected launch weight of around twelve and a half tonnes. Where the original A-3's engine produced about 1500kg of thrust, the A4's engine would need to deliver over 25 tonnes.

The rocket had a steel framework externally clad in rivetted steel plate. Lighter materials were available, but they would not have survived the massive aerodynamic and gravitational forces of hypersonic flight.

The shape of the missiles was reputedly based on that of the German army's 7.92-mm rifle bullet, which was known to be ballistically stable at supersonic speeds.

Power would be provided by burning a mixture of alcohol and liquid oxygen. The rocket carried over five tonnes of alcohol and four tonnes of oxygen, enough for around 70 seconds of powered flight.

By this time it would be travelling at over five and a half thousand kilometres an hour and would have reached a maximum altitude of around 90 kilometres.

The A4 needed a lot of fuel: over 100 kg per second. It was driven into the combustion chamber by a lightweight steam turbine powered by the explosive reaction of hydrogen peroxide and calcium permanganate.

Guidance and control of the missile presented even greater difficulties than the rocket motor. Keeping a rocket upright at launch is like balancing a stick in your hand: you have to be able to sense any changes in balance and apply a corrective movement to keep it stable.

Gyroscopes were used to detect any changes in attitude. They acted as directors to carbon vanes projecting into the rocket exhaust. Actuated by hydraulic servos, these vanes vectored the rocket's thrust, providing low-speed control. At higher speeds the missile was controlled and stabilised by the movable tail surfaces.

Although simple in theory, the control system had to react instantly to cope with gusting winds on launch. It had to tilt the missile to the correct angle so that its ballistic flight path would take it to the target.

The system also had to compensate for changes in aerodynamics as the missile accelerated through the sound barrier, as well as for the missile's changing weight and centre of gravity as fuel was burned.

Autopilots of the day were primitive, so the development team created one of the world's first analogue computers to handle guidance. It was not without its problems, however, and the first V-2s were fitted with an unsatisfactory interim autopilot.

By 1934 the army, forbidden long-range artillery by the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, was showing an interest. Army support meant funding for more ambitious rockets and facilities at the disused artillery range and research establishment at Kummersdorf. *Hauptmann* (later General) Walter Dornberger headed the army team, which in 1937 moved to remote Peenemünde on the Baltic coast. There, larger and larger rockets were built and tested.

THE V-2 FLIES

The mighty A4 rocket design was completed late in 1941, and the first A4 was fired on 13 June 1942. It exploded. The second A4, launched on 16 August, though only partially successful, was the first powered missile to fly faster than sound. The next A4, fired on 3 October, flew under full power for a minute, covering 190 km (118 miles).

Hitler ordered the rocket by

the thousand as the V-2 (*Vergeltungswaffe* or Reprisal Weapon 2).

A stupendous production programme got under way. Initially located at Peenemünde, production was switched to the vast Mittelwerke slave mines after the RAF attacked the research site in August 1943.

Army firing troops were ready for operations in the autumn of 1944. The first operational V-2 launches took place on 6 September, when two missiles were fired against Paris.

Two days later, the sustained campaign against London began. For a while the British government, which had advised Prime Minister Churchill that such a rocket could not be built, and that the RAF should stop wasting time looking for it, told the public the explosions were caused by faulty gas mains.

Within days the truth had to be admitted, but Londoners just got on with winning the war.

The nose of the V-2 carried a contact fuse which detonated the warhead – 910-kg of amatol high-explosive. Attempts to develop a proximity fuse were unsuccessful.

Behind the warhead was the main equipment bay, holding the accelerometers, telemetry and gyro systems, cryogenically cooled by liquid nitrogen.

The upper fuel tank contained over four tonnes of ethyl alcohol. Insulated by glass wool, the tank was filled early in the six-hour launching process, soon after the missile had been elevated onto its launching platform.

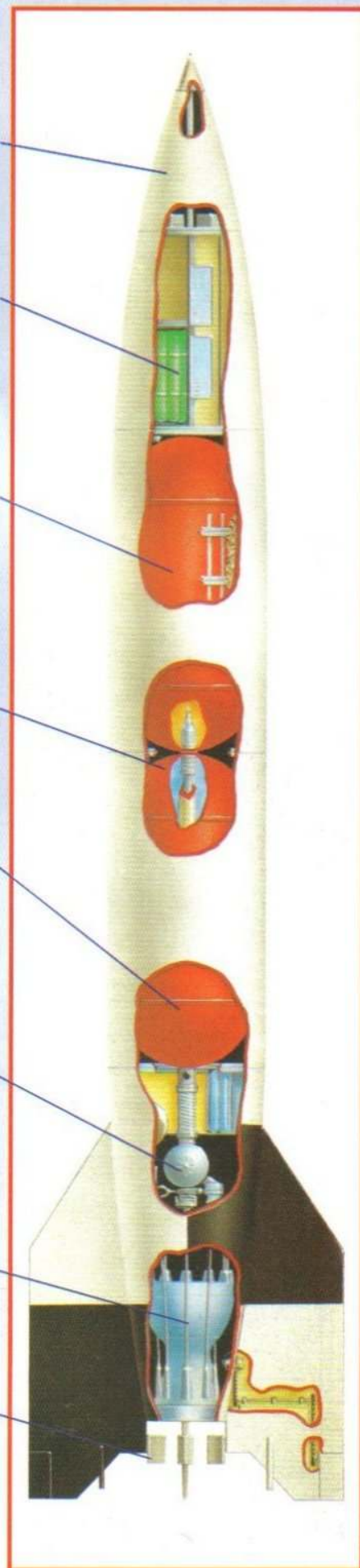
The feed valve at the bottom of the tank passed alcohol into the main feed pipe, which passed through the core of the main liquid oxygen tank. The feed pipe was also thickly insulated.

Over five and a half tonnes of liquid oxygen was pumped into the second main tank during the last two hours of the launch process. Because the tank was insulated the A-4 never developed the frost coating typical of post-war missiles such as the Atlas.

The fuels were pumped at high-pressure by a steam turbine. This was driven by a volatile mix of Z-stoff (calcium permanganate) and T-stoff (hydrogen peroxide). The high-pressure system was needed for the rocket to develop full thrust.

The alcohol and oxygen were fed into the combustion chamber by a ring of injectors, and ignited electrically.

Thrust was vectored by small graphite vanes which extended into the jet exhaust. The main fins gave aerodynamic stability once the missile was up to speed.



HITLER'S WAR MACHINE



Above: The V-2 pilot production plant was set up south of Peenemünde early in 1943. These pre-production A4s are seen in the middle of the year, displaying at least three of the camouflage schemes under consideration for the rocket. Production was interrupted, however, when the RAF mounted a heavy raid a month later, on the night of 17 August.

Below: SS interest in the V-weapon programme saw production moved to a massive underground complex at Nordhausen. There was abundant slave labour from the Dora concentration camp, and tens of thousands of inmates were worked to death. This incomplete V-2 was discovered in the main tunnel of the complex after it was captured by the US Army.



They got quite used to hearing a sudden deafening explosion, followed by the long diminishing rumble, just like thunder, caused by the supersonic plunge of the missile through the sky.

Over 1,300 rockets were launched, mostly from wooded sites near The Hague in Holland. However, some were even launched from the city itself. This launch site was not far from the historic Palace of Peace in the centre of the town.

About 90 percent of the A4s actually reached the British Isles, killing nearly 3,000 people and causing considerable damage. Around 100 rockets blew up in flight or went astray as their guidance systems failed. One rocket actually went east instead of west, hitting the ground near Wiesbaden.

ATTACK ON ANTWERP

Advancing Allied troops had forced the Germans back from the North Sea ports in Belgium and Holland. The German high command decided to use the V-weapons in an attempt to prevent the Allies from using these ports to resupply their forces.

Pulling back to the Eifel mountains, the V-1 launch sites were prepared for operations against Antwerp, Brussels and Liege. Starting on 21 October more than 8,000 V-1s were launched during the Belgian campaign.

The damage they inflicted had little practical military effect. This was largely due to highly effective US Army radar-directed anti-aircraft guns which accounted for 95 per cent of the missiles fired.

The V-2s also took part in the campaign. Over 1,300 were fired against Antwerp, causing considerable damage to the city, but doing little to disrupt the flow of supplies.

A few V-1s, with their range extended to 200 miles, were fired against London during the early days of 1945, but activities were limited. V-2s continued to be launched against continental targets, until the suspension of all

'reprisal' weapon operations on the 27 March.

More than 30,000 V-1s were manufactured, and about 18,000 were fired or dropped in combat. Most of the remainder were destroyed in factories or in transit, though several hundred were found in underground factories at the end of the war. Over 4,000 V-2s out of the near 10,000 produced had been fired in anger.

WASTE OF MONEY?

Ultimately the V-weapons failed to provide Hitler with the vengeance he sought. They absorbed an enormous amount of Nazi Germany's resources, while providing little military return for the huge investment.

The V-1's potential was never really fulfilled. As so often happened under the Third Reich, personal feuds and inter-service rivalries meant that struggles for control were the norm. Senior commanders spent more time fighting each other than fighting the enemy.

The V-2 was far more influential. One of the greatest single achievements in the history of rocketry, it was the foundation of all post-war missile development. The Soviets, who captured Peenemünde at the end of the war, rounded up as many scientists as they could. They had great influence on Soviet missile development.

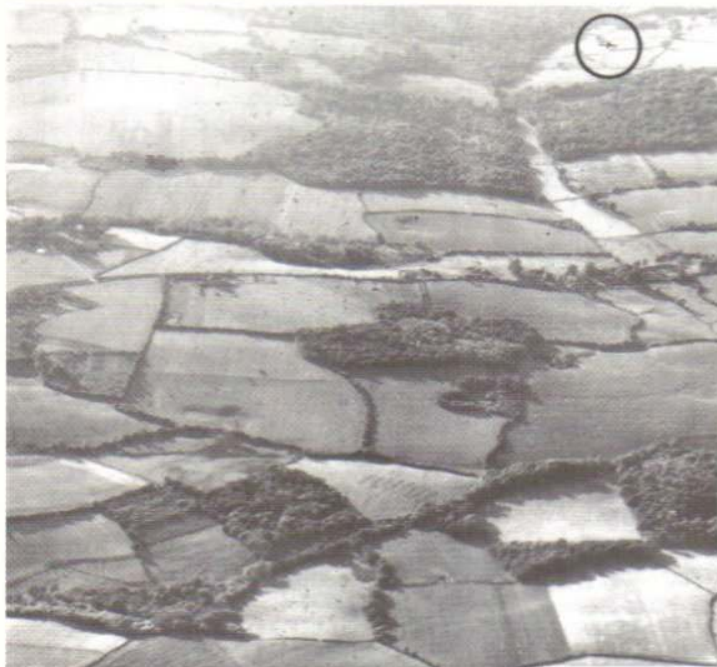
ROAD TO THE MOON

American rocket programmes were also given a massive boost by the German know-how. Many of the scientists were rounded up in an operation called Project Paperclip. They were sent across the Atlantic where they provided the core of the teams which were to develop the first intercontinental ballistic missiles.

It was the men behind the V-2, most notably Werner von Braun, who provided much of the early impetus for the American space programme. In just over two decades they would take man to the moon.



TARGET LONDON



Above: Many V-1s were destroyed by the anti-aircraft belt placed along the Kent coast. Directed by radar, hundreds of guns placed a curtain of shrapnel in the V-1's path, and over 1,800 bombs were brought down.

Left: Any bombs which passed the AA guns were intercepted by Allied fighters. This Hawker Tempest, probably from No. 486 Squadron, is about to open fire on a V-1. The squadron was to claim 223 V-1 kills.



Right: A V-1 flying bomb, its engine cut off by the simple autopilot, noses down over the West End of London. Several bombs caused devastating casualties when they hit crowded shops or apartment blocks.

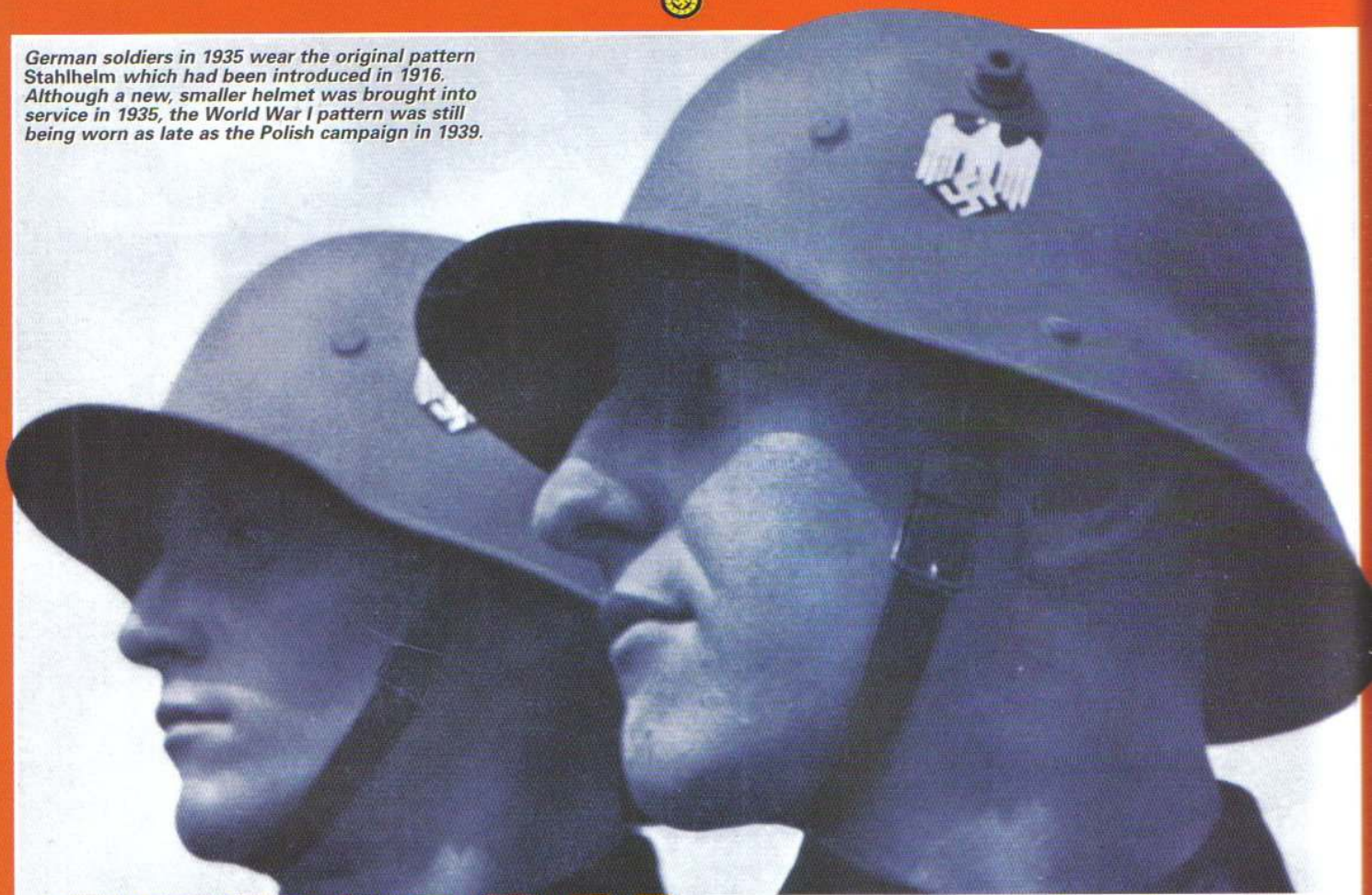
Below: The result of a tonne of high explosive detonating after hitting the ground at more than four times the speed of sound. A V-2 hit this suburban London street late in October 1944, devastating a row of terraced houses.



Both the V-1 and the V-2 were ahead of their time – so far ahead, in fact, that existing technology could not produce a guidance system to match their performance. Although notionally accurate to within a few hundred metres, in practice they would be lucky to hit within five kilometres of a target. Fortunately for the Germans, London presented a target large enough that even V-1s and V-2s had a chance of hitting it. Between June 1944 and March 1945, 2,419 V-1s came down in London, with a further 3,403 impacting outside the city. Over 500 V-2s hit London in the same period, with a similar number missing.



German soldiers in 1935 wear the original pattern Stahlhelm which had been introduced in 1916. Although a new, smaller helmet was brought into service in 1935, the World War I pattern was still being worn as late as the Polish campaign in 1939.



GERMAN ARMY



Left: Wehrmacht regimental standards on parade in 1933 for inspection by the new Reichs Chancellor, Adolf Hitler. Although eventually incorporated into the Nazi system, the German army retained much of its Prussian heritage.

Above: Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt wears a Reichsheer-style coat, as did many of Hitler's generals. Rundstedt's uniform carries a colonel's insignia, a personal idiosyncrasy on the part of the most senior officer in the German army.



IN 1933, THE German army was little more than a cadre, a 100,000-strong force limited by the Treaty of Versailles and incapable of defending Germany's borders.

On 16 March 1935, Adolf Hitler announced the reintroduction of conscription, and the army began to grow at an astonishing rate. By 1939 Hitler's Wehrmacht had become a formidable war machine, designed to use the newly developed Blitzkrieg tactics to fight and win wars more quickly than any army in history. Its equipment was no better than those of any other army of the time, but its troops were among the best-trained in the world.

NEW UNIFORMS

With the reintroduction of conscription came a whole new series of uniforms. The 1935 patterns were to form the basis for German army field equipment right up to the end of the war, though most were to be modified for ease of manufacture or to save materials under wartime conditions.

The basic field grey uniform (which was in fact a grey-green colour) was standard throughout the army. It consisted of steel helmet, side cap or peaked cap, field tunic and trousers, greatcoat and boots. The jackboots, which were to become symbolic of Nazi conquests, were basically the same pattern as had been worn by Prussian troops in the invasion of France in 1870.

UNIFORM SUPPLIES

In peacetime, the German clothing industry managed to keep pace with the enlargement of the army. Uniforms were smart, reasonably comfortable and practical. However, with the outbreak of war, supply could not meet demand, and conscripts would often find themselves being issued with dyed Czech, Polish or French uniforms to which German insignia and national emblems had been hurriedly applied.



Above: The M1935 pattern tunic was the standard German army field uniform for much of the war. This example was worn by an Unteroffizier (Corporal) of the Grossdeutschland Regiment who had been awarded the Iron Cross Second Class, the wound badge and the assault badge awarded for supporting at least three infantry or tank assaults. Formed in 1939 from the Army's elite Berlin Guard Regiment, Grossdeutschland was to grow to become a Panzer corps in 1944.

Right: Before the war the 1935 pattern steel helmet or Stahlhelm generally bore two insignia: on the right the red-white-black shield, and on the left the national symbol of eagle and swastika in silver on a black shield.

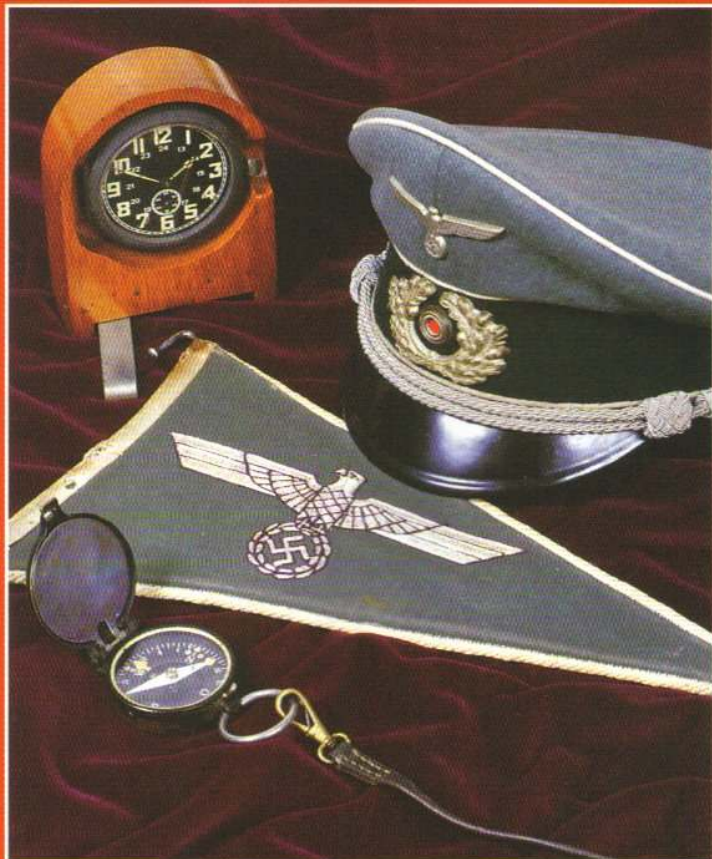




Top left: A Lieutenant General's service tunic. Generals wore red *Waffenfarbe*, together with gold and silver-plated shoulder cords and traditional Prussian style collar patches of hand-embroidered gold on red cloth. Although based on the standard German officer's service dress, this tailor-made item has a number of non-standard features – the red piping is more extensive than most, being used on the collar, front panel and on the French cuffs.

Top right: Parade uniform or *Waffenrock* of an artillery *Wachtmeister* or Sergeant Major. Introduced in 1935 and based on the uniform of the old Imperial army, this formal dress was discontinued with the outbreak of war – though it was worn as walking out dress by individuals for several years afterwards. Distinguished by its eight-button design and prominent 'Swedish' cuffs, this tunic is trimmed in the bright red *Waffenfarbe* of the artillery. The owner of this example had been awarded the Iron Cross, an Ostfront campaign medal, the Anschluss medal and the Sudetenland medal. The silver infantry assault badge was awarded for participating in at least three infantry attacks. On the sleeve the Krim shield commemorates taking part in the Crimean campaign of 1941 and 1942, and the oval proficiency badge on the forearm indicates that the bearer was a qualified gun-layer (or aimer of artillery pieces)

Left: A peaked field cap worn by Panzer non-commissioned officers. NCO caps are identifiable from their leather straps and issue aluminium insignia – originally issued in 1935 and worn all through the war. The dress cap was similar, but with wire stiffening.



FELDGRAU OF THE ARMY

THE GERMAN ARMY'S distinctive *Feldgrau* or field grey uniform colour was such a distinguishing feature of the service that ordinary soldiers were often known as 'Feldgraus'. Given the sense of tradition which permeated the German army, even under the Third Reich, one might be forgiven for thinking that the colour was traditional. But in fact it was a relatively new innovation, having first been applied to the Imperial field uniform in 1910, and only becoming general during the First World War.

Until 1910, there was no such thing as a homogeneous German army. Each of the states which made up the Empire had its own uniform colour and insignia; there were often branch of service variations, and sometimes uniforms varied within regiments, with the guard companies differing from line companies and support units.

In 1910, the Imperial Army introduced the standard Feldgrau field uniform, though State and regimental variations were maintained. The colourful pre-1910 uniforms were kept as parade and ceremonial dress. The outbreak of war in 1914 changed things however, as variety in uniform style is a peacetime luxury. By 1915 and again in 1917, the design of tunic was simplified for ease of production.

When the Reichsheer was formed after the war, its members were originally issued with a single style of eight-buttoned jacket with side pockets. A simpler field tunic with six buttons and four patch pockets was introduced with Nazi rearmament in 1935, and formed the basis of German Army uniforms up to 1944. Reichsheer coats continued to be worn, however, particularly by generals.

Top left: An officers field cap, the white Waffenfarbe or arm-of-service colour indicating that the wearer was an infantryman. Also shown are a vehicle pennant, a compass and a chronometer.

Top right: The officer's dress dagger was worn primarily with dress uniforms, in walking out dress or in mess uniforms. On ceremonial occasions it might be replaced by a sabre. The design for the dress dagger was approved in May 1935, soon after Germany began to rearm openly, and it remained an approved item of service dress until the Autumn of 1944. Unlike swords, which were made to a variety of individual designs, the dress daggers generally differed only in the colour of their grips.

Below: Jäger – literally 'hunter' – or light infantry units wore oakleaf insignia, in the form of cloth arm badges and metal cap badges. Gebirgsjäger or mountain troops wore insignia carrying Edelweiss flowers. Both types of unit wore green Waffenfarbe.



A Z

OF THE THIRD REICH

Nordhausen

Location of the underground slave labour complex constructed in the Harz Mountains about 80 km west of Leipzig. Also known as Dora-Mittelbau and Dora-Nordhausen, it was created after the British bombing of Peenemünde in 1943. The purpose of the complex was for the secure construction of V-2 rockets and other vengeance weapons.

Several thousand Buchenwald inmates were sent to the site in 1943. An average of 100 men died each day as they dug 46 tunnels into the mountains. The tunnels were up to 30 metres high. Prisoners were initially housed underground, but in the spring of 1944 a compound known as Dora was constructed

on the surface. In the autumn of 1944 the SS turned Dora-Mittelhausen into an independent camp, with a population of at least 12,000 and controlling at least 30 sub-camps.

Conditions at Nordhausen were bad even by concentration camp standards, and the mortality rate was particularly high. Sick prisoners were sent to Auschwitz or Mauthausen for disposal. Most surviving prisoners had been shipped to Bergen-Belsen by the time the American 1st Army captured the site in April 1945.

Right: Slaves toil in one of the underground galleries of the Mittelwerke. Thousands died in building the 'V-' or 'Vengeance' weapons which were produced at the huge plant.



Nordlicht

'Northern Light' was the code name for the projected capture of the besieged city of Leningrad. German troops first reached the city during Operation Barbarossa in 1941. Rather than attack the city, Hitler instructed that it should be surrounded and starved into submission.

On 23 July 1942 Hitler ordered Army Group North to capture Leningrad by the beginning of September, to coincide with the expected victory at Stalingrad. The operation, originally code named *Feuerzauber* or 'Fire Magic', was launched on 26 August. Despite a massive

assault and horrific suffering, the city held out. The siege would continue for 900 days until it was finally broken by the Red Army in 1944.

Right: A burned-out Soviet train hit by Stukas during the German drive on Leningrad in August 1942. The hard-pressed defenders repelled the attack, as they did all such Wehrmacht assaults in a siege lasting 900 days.



See also Hitler's Battles

Issue 11: Barbarossa

See also Hitler's Battles

Issue 14: Russia '42

Novemberverbrecher

November Criminals, the perjorative term used by all shades of right-wing political opinion to describe those responsible for negotiating the armistice on 11 November 1918. Particular targets were democratic politicians like Friedrich Ebert and Matthias Erzberger, as well as Social Democrats in general, Bolsheviks and Jews. The aim was to lay Germany's defeat in the war at the feet of the politicians, lifting the blame from the soldiers and making way for the 'Stab in the Back' theory. Adolf Hitler was particularly fond of the phrase, and used it indiscriminately for

those who signed the armistice and those who benefited from it – the Weimar Republic. Right wing groups often derided the Republic as the 'November System' or the 'System of Infamy' and particularly attacked the government's attempts to meet the terms of the Versailles Treaty.

Right: Communist ex-soldiers move through Berlin after World War I. Hitler and other right-wing nationalists blamed both the loss of the war and the anarchy in post-war Germany directly on those democratic politicians who had signed the armistice in 1918 – the 'November Criminals'.



Nowotny, Walther (1920 - 1944)

Fifth ranking Luftwaffe fighter ace, he was officially credited with 258 kills of which 255 were on the Eastern Front. Born in Gmünd in Austria, the son of a railway official, Nowotny joined the Luftwaffe as a cadet in 1939. Promoted to *Leutnant*, he flew with JG54 under Hannes Trautloft during the invasion of the USSR, and scored his first victory on 23 July 1941. By August his score had risen to ten, and within a year he had reached 56 kills. He reached 100 kills on 17 July 1943, and then accelerated the pace. By 18 August he had added another 50 kills. By 22 September his

score had risen to 220, and on 19 October he was the first pilot in history to reach 250 kills – a remarkable total coming in only 442 combat missions, with the last 150 being scored in only three months.

Nowotny had been promoted to *Hauptmann* or Captain after his 220th kill, and was awarded the Knight's Cross with Oak Leaves, Swords and Diamonds after his 250th. He was the eighth member of the German armed forces and the sixth Luftwaffe fighter pilot to receive the diamonds.

In February 1944 he was assigned as a Major to take

command of Fighter Training School No.1, but in August he took command of *Erprobungs Kommando 262*, the first combat jet fighter unit. Re-named *Kommando Nowotny* in October 1944, it lost its commander on 8 November when his Me 262 lost power. Nowotny baled out, but his parachute snagged the tailplane and he was dragged down to his death.

Right: The first fighter ace to achieve 250 kills, and the first commander of an operational jet fighter unit, Austrian-born Walter Nowotny was one of the greatest combat pilots in history.



NS-Jubel

National Socialist Jubilation – the stage-managed applause encountered at demonstrations, Party meetings and rallies. Party propaganda managers skillfully manipulated the applause at such events, giving the impression that it was a spontaneous crowd reaction.

In fact, it was very carefully controlled in three stages, from mild interest to the *Dritte Stufe* or Third Stage, which was the peak volume reserved for reaction to the Führer's speeches. A decibel

value was assigned for the volume of applause to be used at these ritual occasions, with coloured lights indicated to the audience the proper amount of jubilation to be displayed.

Right: Even though the sight of Adolf Hitler was enough to send most ordinary Germans into an ecstatic state, the organisers of big party occasions left nothing to chance. Every 'spontaneous' burst of applause or acclaim was carefully stage-managed for maximum propaganda effect.



NS-Deutscher Ärztebund

The National Socialist German Doctors' League was founded at the Fourth *Parteitag* in 1929. Among the 50 founding members were Gerhard Wagner, Chairman of the league until 1939, and Leonardo Conti, his successor.

In 1932, after the organisation

had been opened to dentists, apothecaries and veterinarians, membership had grown to nearly 3,000. It was at this time that the league began running courses in racial hygiene.

In 1934, the League's membership had grown to nearly

30,000. Under the process of *Gleichschaltung* it was the body tasked with absorbing the German medical profession into the Nazi system, superseding all previous medical associations of the Weimar Republic. Its leader was appointed Director of the

Main Office for German Health, and *Reichärztführer*, or Reich Physicians leader. Conti, who was to rise to the rank of SS *Obergruppenführer*, assumed the leadership in 1939. In 1945 at Nuremberg the NS *Ärztebund* was declared an illegal organisation.

NS-Lehrerbund

Originally created in 1929 as the Organisation of National Socialist Educators, the National Socialist Teacher's Alliance or NSLB was headquartered in the 'House of German Education' in Bayreuth. Founded by Hans Schemm, it became one of the key *Angeschlossenener Verbände* or

Nazi member associations with the seizure of power in 1933. Its primary role was to ensure that all teachers working in Germany followed the Nazi line.

The NSLB was divided into ten divisions, covering everything from leisure activities to teachers camps. The most important

division was that for Education and Instruction, which had seven *Fachschaften* or speciality branches overseeing all forms of educational establishment from primary schools to universities.

Hans Schemm died in 1935, and was succeeded as *Reichswalter* or Administrator by

Fritz Wächtler. As with other Nazi leagues, the NSLB played an important part in disseminating the Nazi world view through all layers of German society. The League ran its own *Reichsschule* at Bayreuth, where functionaries were taught the political side of the league's activities.

NS-Rechtswahrerbund

National Socialist League of Guardians of the Law or NSRB, the name by which the *NS-Juristenbund* or BNSDJ became known after 1936. The Nazi lawyers' Association, originally founded by Hans Frank in 1928, was primarily the

NSDAP's legal defence organisation. After the seizure of power in 1933, however, it was tasked with the synchronisation of all German legal bodies. By the end of 1934 all members of the various Lawyers' and Judges' associations had been

incorporated into the BNSDJ.

It was renamed the NSRB in 1936 after incorporating every person involved in the administration of the law, from clerks and secretaries to bailiffs and investigators.

The NSRB administered the

Honour Court of German Law. This had formidable and wide-ranging disciplinary powers. Any member who failed to use the German greeting – "*Heil Hitler*" – or who failed to vote in Reichstag elections or plebiscites could lose his licence to practice.

A-Z OF THE THIRD REICH

Nuremberg (Nürnberg)

Nuremberg, the capital of Franconia, is an ancient city located on the river Pegnitz 150 km northwest of Munich. It was one of the first Nazi strongholds outside Munich, thanks to the activities of its *Gauleiter*, Julius Streicher. In 1927 and 1929 it was the scene of the Third and Fourth NSDAP Reich Party Congresses, and in 1933 Adolf Hitler declared that the city would host all such occasions. As a result, Nuremberg became the 'second capital' of National Socialism.

The city suffered badly from Allied bombing in World War II and was captured by the Americans in April 1945.

Right: Adolf Hitler Platz, in the centre of the old city of Nürnberg. Franconia became a stronghold of National Socialism because its conservative, agricultural and largely protestant population liked the nationalist, anti-Semitic message preached by Hitler.

See also Inside the Third Reich
Issue 2: Party Rallies



Nuremberg Laws

The Nuremberg Laws were the definitive statements on Nazi attitudes to race – particularly as applied to 'Aryans' and Jews. Announced by Hitler on 15 September 1935 at the Reich Party Congress, the 'Reich Citizenship Law' and the 'Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honour' limited Reich citizenship to those of 'pure' German blood, and made Nazi anti-Semitism the law of the land. The first laws, together with

supplementary decrees passed later in the year, withdrew citizenship from persons of "non-German blood" – even those who had fought during WWI. It forbade marriage between Jews and "Nationals of German or kindred blood", and restricted their role in political, social, educational and professional life.

Between 1935 and 1943 some 250 further decrees were issued, including the 1941 instruction that all Jews were to wear the

"Star of David" on their clothing. Eventually, of course, the Nazis would turn from legal discrimination and oppression to outright Genocide.

Right: Adolf Hitler speaks at the opening of the 1935 Reichsparteitag. It is at this meeting that the Führer will present the Nuremberg laws – laws which will take citizenship away from German Jews, and which will give anti-Semitism the legal base from which will grow the Holocaust.



Nuremberg Rallies

Officially known as Reich Party Congresses or *Reichsparteitage*, the Nuremberg Rallies were not true political meetings: rather, they were propaganda exercises, designed to glorify the Führer and the party, both to the ordinary Nazi in the street and to the rest of the world.

The first Nuremberg event took place in July 1926. By 1933, when Hitler's coming to power was celebrated, they were massive

theatrical events. The 1934 Rally was filmed as 'Triumph of the Will'. Ever larger rallies followed, though the outbreak of war in 1939 meant that the 1938 rally was the last.

Right: Senior Party members gather at the Luitpoldhalle in Nuremberg at the 1933 meeting – Der Parteitag des Sieges, or the Party Rally of Victory. These events would get more and more spectacular each succeeding year.



Nuremberg Trial

The International Military Tribunal was set up at Nuremberg after the war to try major Nazi leaders and organisations. Sitting between November 1945 and September 1946, eight judges from the USA, UK, France and the USSR oversaw a prosecution council of Allied lawyers and a largely German defence council. The defendants were tried on four counts:

Crimes against peace

(planning and making war)

War crimes (responsibility for crimes during war)

Crimes against humanity (covering racial persecution)

Conspiracy (to commit crimes alleged in other counts)

The court tried 21 major war criminals and sentenced Goering, Frank, Frick, Jodl, Kaltenbrunner, Keitel, Ribbentrop, Rosenberg, Sauckel, Seyss-Inquart and Streicher to death. Funk, Hess and Raeder were jailed for life, while Schirach, Speer, Neurath and Doenitz received ten- to 20-year terms. Fritzsche, von Papen and Schacht were found not guilty. The condemned men were hanged in October 1946 with the exception of Goering who committed suicide.

In spite of the justifiable claim that the Nuremberg trials were "arbitrary examples of victor's justice," established simply to take revenge on the defeated, the

International Military Tribunal established an important moral precedent. For the first time, crimes against humanity were treated as being of global significance, and had to answer to laws above and beyond the nation state.

Right: A slimmed-down Hermann Goering, free of the drug addiction which had clouded his mind for years, was the dominant figure on the stand at Nuremberg. Goering, who had been disowned by Hitler at the end, took perverse pleasure in being the 'Number One' accused at the Tribunal.

See also Inside the Third Reich
Issue 35: Nuremberg



Oberfohren memorandum

The Reichstag fire of 27 February 1933 was a key event in the National Socialist seizure of power, paving the way for anti-Communist legislation and providing the justification for Adolf Hitler's assumption of dictatorial powers.

Dutch anarchist Marinus van der Lubbe was charged with the crime, but many opponents of the Nazis did not buy the story that he was working for the Communists.

German National People's Party parliamentary leader Dr Ernst Oberfohren circulated a report in 1933 asserting that the Reichstag fire was not the work of the Dutchman. It had been conceived

by Joseph Goebbels and supervised by Herman Goering, then the acting Prussian Minister of the Interior assisted by Wolf Heinrich Graf von Helldorf a Nazi leader in Berlin and a Lieutenant Schultz.

The memorandum was published in Britain by the Manchester Guardian on 27 April 1933. On 7 May Oberfohren was reported to have committed suicide.

Right: The Reichstag burns on the night of 27 February 1932. According to Ernst Oberfohren, it had been more than fortuitous for the Nazis: it had been planned and executed by them.



Odessa

The *Organisation der Ehemaligen SS Angehörige* is thought to have been set up in 1947 to assist former Nazi, Gestapo and SS men to avoid capture by the Allies. Odessa and a number of

other organisations are thought to have financed and arranged for the escape of from Germany. Several escape routes were set up probably before the end of the war, using looted funds deposited

in Swiss or Vatican banks. The main routes were through Austria and Italy to Spain, to the Middle East, but most of all to the right-wing dictatorships of South America. Odessa was apparently

dissolved in 1952, being replaced by the *Kameradenwerke* organisation. This was dedicated to helping ex-Nazis stay hidden from the authorities in whatever country they had settled.

Oberkommando

Oberkommandos were the highest military command levels under the supreme commander, Adolf Hitler. The *Oberkommando des Heeres* – OKH or High Command of the Army – was developed from the Weimar *Wehramt* or War Office, which was later re-named the *Allgemeines Heeresamt* or General Army Office. In May 1935 this became OKH. In December 1941 Hitler dismissed General Walter von Brauchitsch who had headed the OKH, and assumed supreme command.

Oberkommando der Luftwaffe – OKL or High Command of the Air Force – was the administrative

unit responsible for all activities of the Luftwaffe. It was headed by Hermann Goering.

Oberkommando der Marine – OKM – was the equivalent High Command of the Navy. The Naval commander in Chief until 1943 was Admiral Raeder, who was succeeded by Admiral Doenitz.

Unlike the Allies, the Germans had no real combined staff organisation. In theory, OKW – *Oberkommando der Wehrmacht* or High Command of the Armed Forces – could have played the part. It was a new tri-service command set up by Hitler on 4 February 1938 to replace the old *Reichskriegsministerium* or

War Ministry. In practice, however, OKW served primarily as the Führer's military office – the high commands of the other services retained their independence to the end of the war, with the Luftwaffe and Navy in particular being unreceptive to instructions emanating from the OKW commander, Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel.

Right: Hitler in the field, watching the bombardment of Warsaw in 1939. Each of the three services had its own high command, but ultimately there was only one true Oberkommando – and that was the will of Adolf Hitler.



Ohlendorf, Otto (1908 - 1951)

An SS mass executioner, Otto Ohlendorf was born in Hanover. A student of law and economics, he worked at the Institute of Applied Economic Science after qualifying. Ohlendorf joined the NSDAP in 1925, becoming a member of the SS in 1926. In the early 30s he was a party advisor on organisation and economics. In 1936 he joined the SD, taking charge of the Inland SD – Amt III of Heydrich's RSHA – in 1939.

Ohlendorf, promoted to *SS-Brigadeführer*, commanded *Einsatzgruppe D* in the 1941 invasion of the USSR. Operating

in the southern Ukraine between June 1941 and July 1942 his group murdered 90,000 Jews.

Even though he was not a favourite of Heinrich Himmler, he returned to Berlin as deputy director of the Central Planning Board of Overseas Trade while remaining head of Amt III. In 1944 he was promoted to *Gruppenführer* and *Generalleutnant der Polizei*.

Brought to trial in September 1947, he claimed historical precedent for the murder of Roma in the Thirty Years War, and that the extermination of the

Jews was as 'historically necessary' as the American use of the atomic bomb against Japan. He was sentenced to death in April 1948, but was not executed until June 1951.

Right: Otto Ohlendorf was one of the 'intellectual thugs' who found a home in Heydrich's security service in the late 1930s. Ohlendorf's evidence at Munich was crucial in establishing just how murderous the Einsatzgruppen had been.

See also Holocaust
Issue 3: Einsatzgruppen



A-Z OF THE THIRD REICH

Olbricht, Friedrich (1888 - 1944)

One of the key conspirators in the July Bomb Plot, Friedrich Olbricht was born in Leisnig, Saxony on 4 October 1888. A career soldier who joined the Imperial Army in 1907, Olbricht served on the General Staff during World War I.

Between the wars Olbricht remained in the *Reichswehr*, and from 1926 worked in the Foreign Armies department of the Armed Forces Ministry. In the late 1930s he held a succession of infantry commands.

In 1940, he moved to the Army

High Command, where he held a series of important staff posts. As deputy commander of the Reserve Army in 1943 he was based at the War Office in Bendlerstrasse in Berlin.

A deeply religious man Olbricht regarded the Nazi movement as a disgrace to Germany. He had been in contact with Army opposition groups since the late 1930s, and worked actively to overthrow it.

Olbricht organised much of the planned coup which was to take

place after the July Bomb plot, but because of communication problems failed to arrest the Nazi leadership in the chaos after the bomb blast.

Olbricht was arrested at the War Office and along with von Stauffenberg was summarily executed by firing squad.

Right: Friederich Olbricht and his Chief of Staff, Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg were the driving and organising forces behind the attempt to assassinate Hitler which took place in July 1944.



Olympiad XI

The 1936 Berlin Olympic Games were held only three and a half years after the establishment of the Nazi government. After initial reservations – by holding the games, Germany would have to play host to Jews and Blacks competing for other countries – the Nazis decided that the propaganda opportunities were simply too great to be missed.

In 1933, the Führer told the International Olympic Committee that Germany would not bar any competitor for racial reasons.

The Government built nine arenas for the games, including a

magnificent main stadium. During the course of the games, anti-Jewish propaganda was kept hidden. On the opening day, a crowd of 110,000 roared with delight when the shot putter Hans Woellke won gold for Germany. However wins by competitors from other countries caused the disenchanted Hitler to leave the stadium. He was particularly offended when the black American Jesse Owens won four gold medals for track and field events.

For the new German government the outcome of the

games was a success – they won the largest number of medals and the internationally acclaimed film of the events by Leni Riefenstahl celebrated the stable, confident community that had staged the Olympiad.

Right: German and American swimmers pose for the cameras. The Olympics proved to be a propaganda triumph for National Socialism.



**See also Inside the Third Reich
Issue 23: Berlin Olympics**

Ordensburgen

Order Castles were prestigious institutions financed by the German Labour Front. They were residential leadership academies designed to train the Nazi elite. The name *Ordensburg* was taken from the medieval fortresses built by military orders such as the Teutonic Knights and other orders. Three were established, at Crössinsee in Pomerania, at Sonthofen in the Allgau, and at Vogelsang in the Eifel mountains.

Each accommodated 500 instructors, administrative staff

and grooms and 1,000 students called *Junkers*. Students had to be party members in good standing, who had completed both labour and military service. Most were in their mid-20s.

As with most Nazi educational institutions, physical training was a large part of the course. The academic side stressed racial science as well as Germanic history, philosophy and culture.

Academic standards were not high: only about one in ten *Junkers* had an *Abitur* or school

leaving certificate, and less than one percent had any university education.

Only one two-year course had been completed by 1939: during the war the *Ordensburg* hosted Adolf Hitler *Schule* and retraining courses for wounded soldiers.

Right: The Ordensburg at Sonthofen, about 100 km southeast of Munich. Modelled on medieval institutions, the Ordensburg were designed to provide the next generation of Nazi Party leaders.



Ordnertruppe

The strong-arm squads enlisted by Hitler in the early days of the Nazi movement were known as 'Monitor' or 'Order' troops. The *Ordnertruppe* were formed in 1920, after 'National Socialist' had been added to the title 'German Workers' Party'. Recruited mainly from former soldiers, their task was to defend Nazi meetings and break up those of the Communists. Early members included Ulrich Graf and Emil Maurice.

As a cover the *Ordnertruppe*

were originally called the Gymnastics and Sports Division of the party. In 1921 the *Ordnertruppe* formed the nucleus of the SA or Storm Troopers.

Right: A Party meeting in Munich in the early 1920s. From the beginning, Hitler knew he would need some thugs and bully boys to keep order. These thugs were to become the SA.

**See also Secret Hitler Files
Issue 22: Hitler builds the Party**



COMING IN THE NEXT VOLUMES OF **HITLER'S** Third Reich

SECRET HITLER FILES

Hitler the Orator
Mein Kampf



THE HOLOCAUST

Jewish emigration
Kovno Ghetto



HITLER'S HENCHMEN

Baldur Von Schirach
Alfred Rosenberg

HITLER'S WAR MACHINE

Assault Guns
Ju 88
Focke-Wulf 190



INSIDE THE REICH

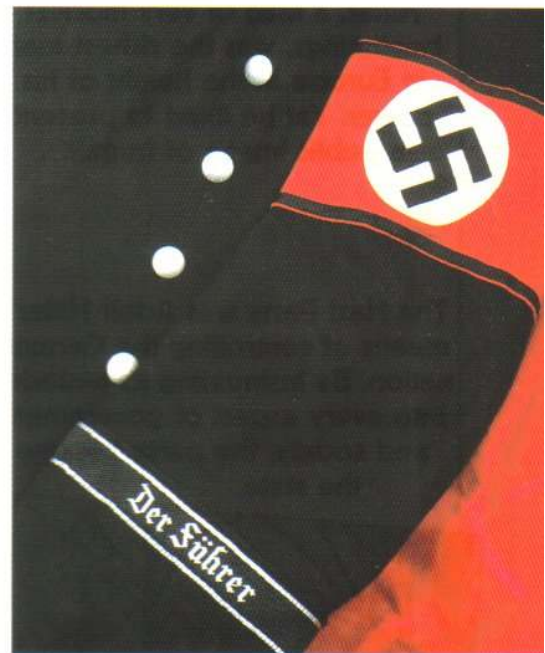
Church and State
German opposition
Berlin Olympics

NAZI HORRORS

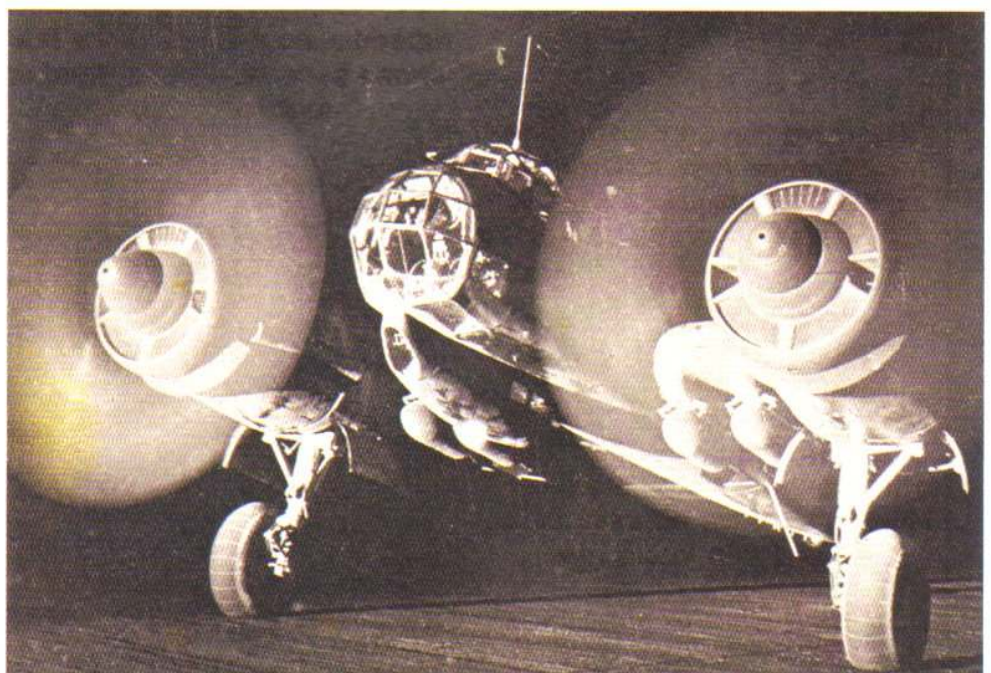
Gross Rosen
Camp commandants
Mauthausen

NAZI SYMBOLS

The Swastika
Afrika Korps
Cuff-titles



A-TO-Z OF THE THIRD REICH



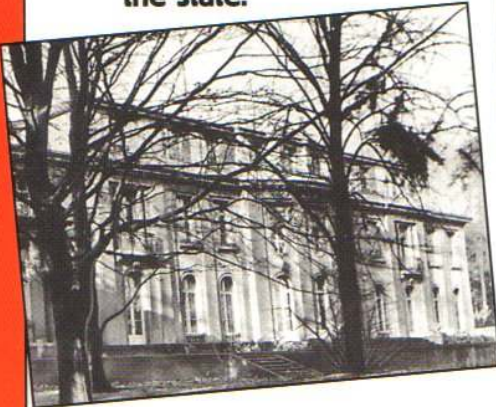
IN THIS VOLUME OF **HITLER'S** **Third Reich**

SECRET HITLER FILES

Hitler, a man of very modest beginnings, was the richest man in Europe at the height of his power. Yet he liked to present a public image of frugality.

INSIDE THE THIRD REICH

The Nazi Party was Adolf Hitler's means of controlling the German nation. By insinuating its tentacles into every aspect of government and society, the party became the state.



HOLOCAUST

Reinhard Heydrich chaired a conference at an innocuous villa on the Wannsee early in 1942. Here he and 15 top Nazis worked out the plans for the Final Solution.

HITLER'S BATTLES

By the beginning of 1943, it seemed that the U-boats were winning the battle of the Atlantic. More boats were operational, and Allied ship losses rose catastrophically.



HENCHMEN

An outspoken loner, Heinz Guderian was the father of the *Panzerwaffe*. Beloved by his men but contemptuous of incompetent superiors, he was one of the few German generals able to stand up to Adolf Hitler.

WAR MACHINE

As the war turned against Germany, Hitler placed his hopes in 'wonder weapons'. Technologically advanced, the V-1 and V-2 were of little value strategically, and almost bankrupted the Reich.

